

James B. Thompson

No Matter How Thin You Slice It—



63 CARTOONS

By **S. Cameron**



FROM the time Stewart Cameron's cartoons first began to appear regularly in the Calgary Herald, requests for extra copies and suggestions of publication in book form have been increasingly frequent. It is in response to those requests and suggestions that this book has been assembled.

It was originally intended to include the entire series of cartoons up to date, but that undertaking proved unwieldy and it was decided that instead of eliminating some of the cartoons and thus breaking their continuity they should be published in instalments of which the present volume is the first.

The Cameron cartoons, contributing a touch of merriment to an otherwise drab episode, have enjoyed exceedingly widespread popularity. There have even been instances where they were imported into Government caucus at Edmonton and there passed from hand to hand (with varying degrees of relish) while the solemn discussion of "social credit" went forward. It is the publishers' hope that this collection will meet with as amiable and as general a welcome as the individual pictures it comprises.

STEWART CAMERON. Herald staff artist, whose cartoons form this book, is a native of Calgary, born here 26 years ago when William Aberhart, B.A., was a young pedagogue with the ink still fresh upon his extramural "sheep-skin."

Though he was at no time under Mr. Aberhart's tutelage, Cameron received his public and high school education in this city, completing his academic education with two years of Arts at Mount Royal Junior College.

Drawing and sketching caught his interest even before school age and cartooning became his major interest. He began to draw assiduously at seven or eight years of age and in his early 'teens was an accomplished, if amateur, draftsman. He did occasional sketches and illustrations for high school year books and later for the "Gateway," student publication of the University of Alberta.

Another hobby, packing horses in the mountains, brought him to public attention when he submitted a series of humorous sketches of his experiences to the Canadian Geographical Journal.

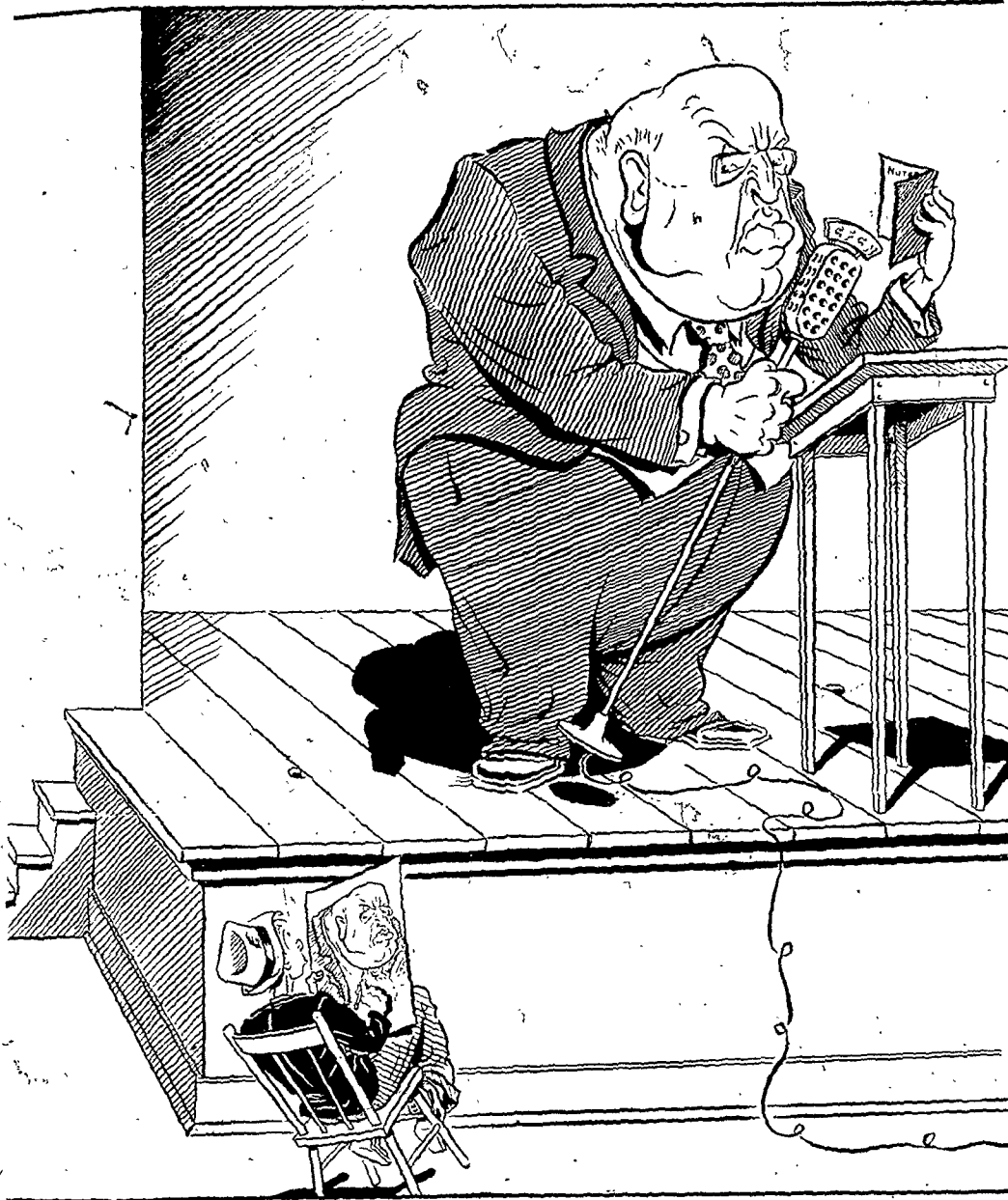
Seeking more practical experience, he went to Hollywood in January, 1936, and where he worked for a time at the Walt Disney studios.

He joined the Herald staff in June, 1936, as staff cartoonist and his work has been accorded increasing popularity since that time. Recalling his work under Walt Disney, Cameron's friends have sometimes accused him of depicting the soul of Mickey Mouse behind the features of William Aberhart, but the young artist firmly denies the charge.

Always given to plain speaking, Cameron carries into his work a notable directness and economy of detail. His style is unique and his clarity unmistakable. Newspapers and periodicals in other parts of Canada and in the United States have frequently reproduced his cartoons.

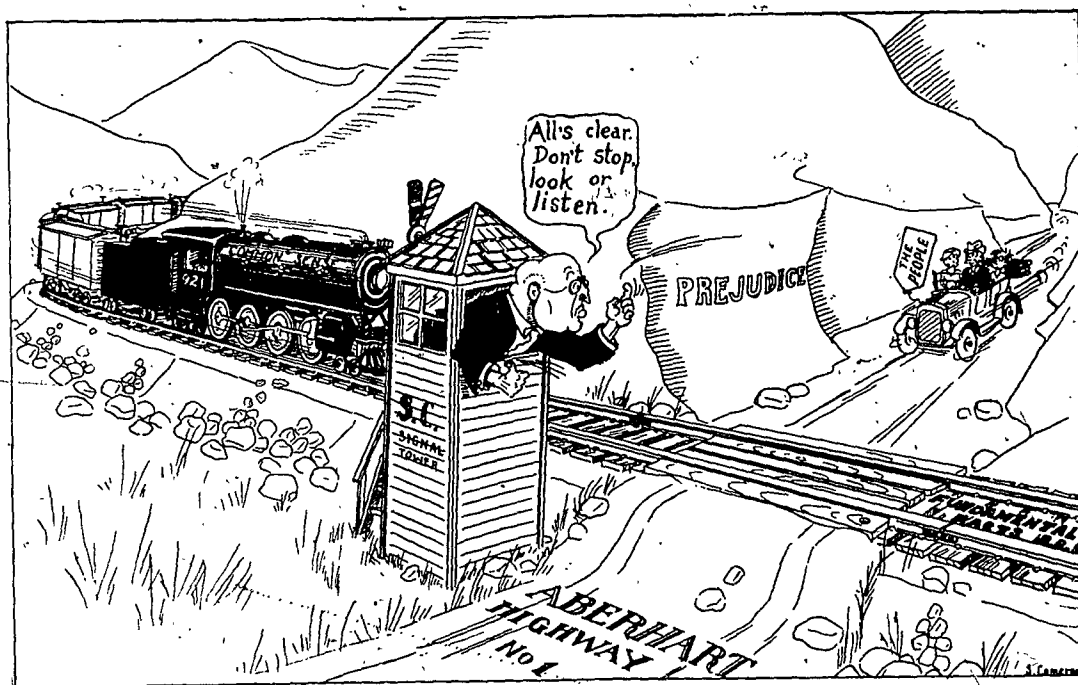
Though there are many telling strokes in his sketches, his work has been without bitterness. The humorous aspects of the provincial situation have always been foremost in his mind. While the subjects of his fun have sometimes voiced their wrath and even called it "diabolical" he has refrained from retorting in kind, but gone cheerfully on with his task, producing what in its present perspective seems less a collection of cartoons than a full-length portrait of Alberta's "Social Credit" administration.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS



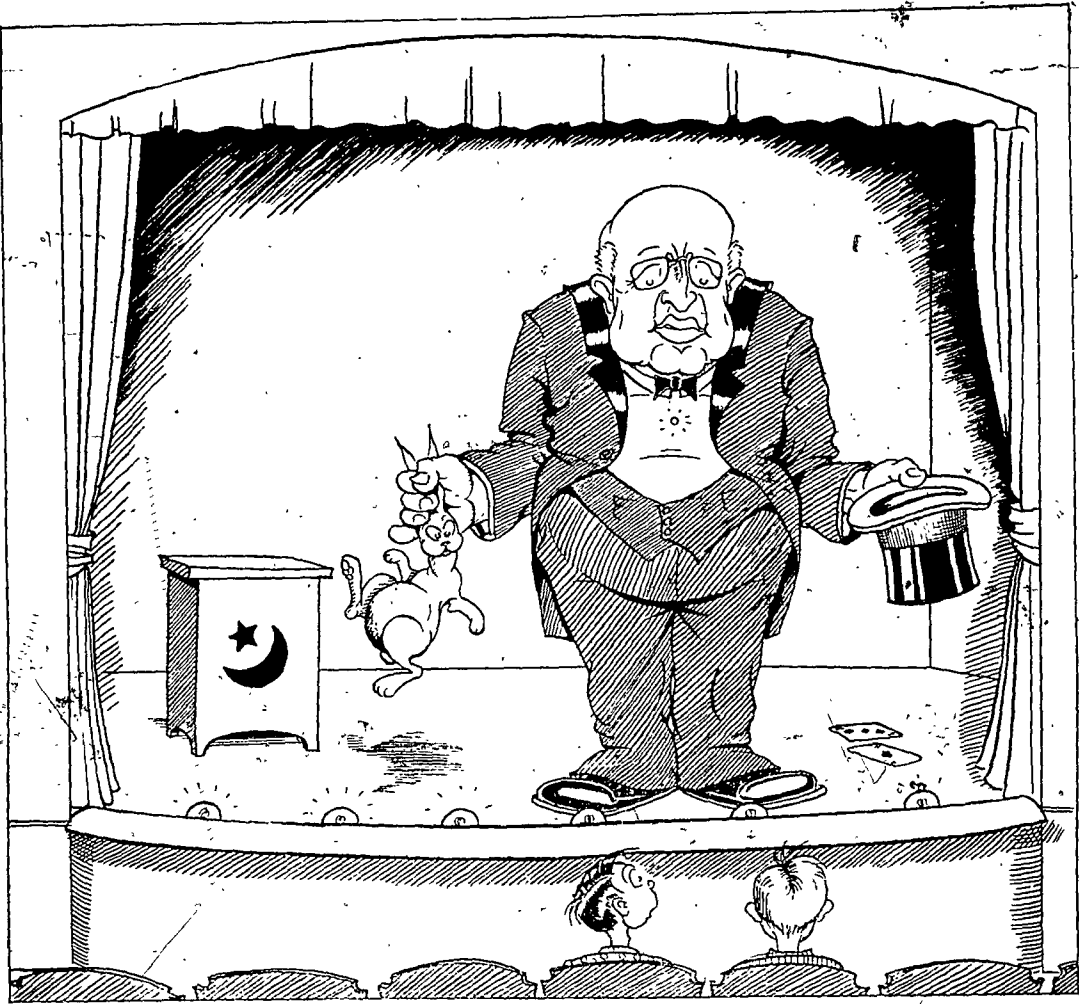
Drawn from memory — the Premier and Herald Cartoonist are happily thrown together for the first time. (June, 1935.)

THE NEW SIGNALMAN



ON August 21, 1935, the day before the Alberta provincial elections, Mr. Cameron's first cartoon appeared in the Calgary Herald. It was a last minute warning to the people of Alberta to beware of the policies of the "Social Credit" party headed by William Aberhart, B.A. At that time Mr. Aberhart was principal of the Crescent Heights High School in Calgary. (August 21, 1935.)

THE BIG MOMENT

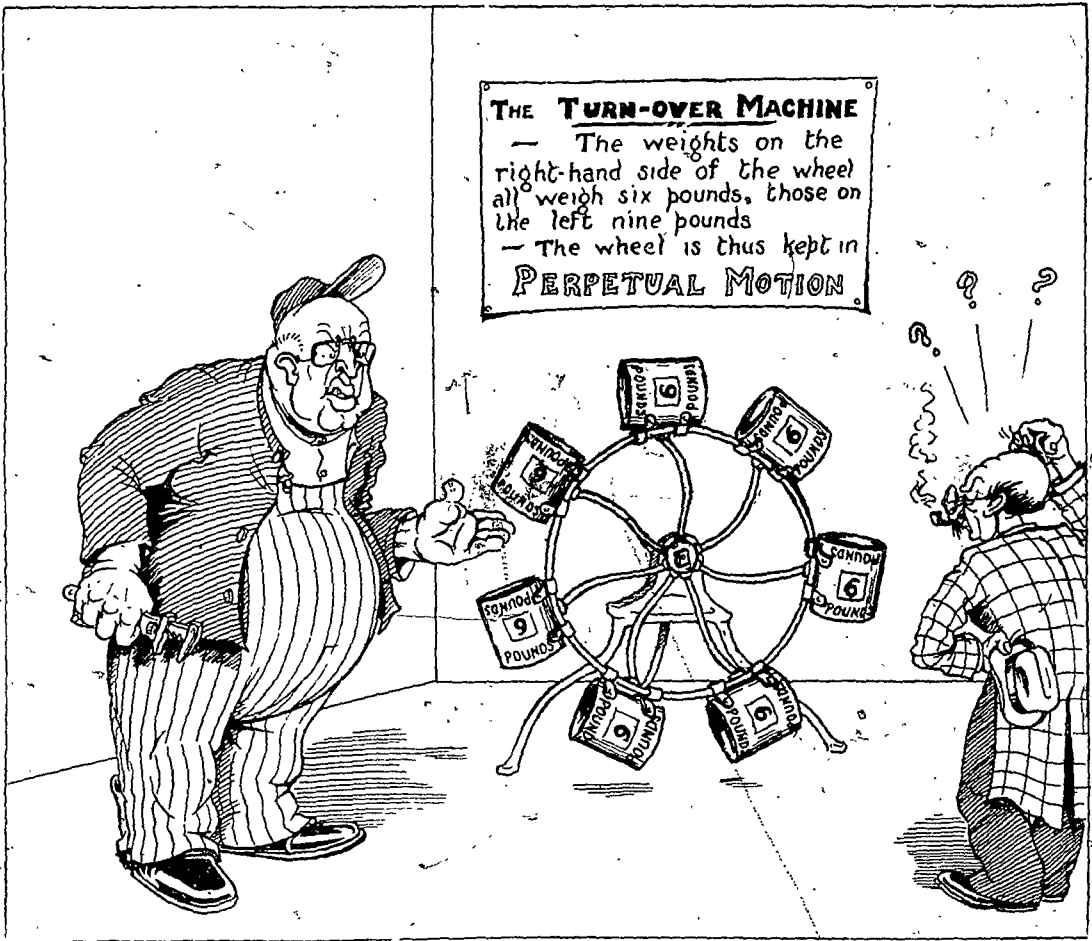


MR. ABERHART: "You must realize surely that you are not getting anywhere by your questions."

MR. ABERHART'S pre-election promises of \$25 per month, a just price, interest free loans, etc., were still far from fulfilment in June 1936. He came to Calgary on June 18 to try and "sell" the government's scrip plan to the people. He was bombarded with questions at a meeting held in Western Canada High School and became somewhat annoyed. The cartoonist depicts him in the role of the magician who objected to revealing his bag of tricks to his audience. (June 18, 1936.)

TIGHT BINDING

DESTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

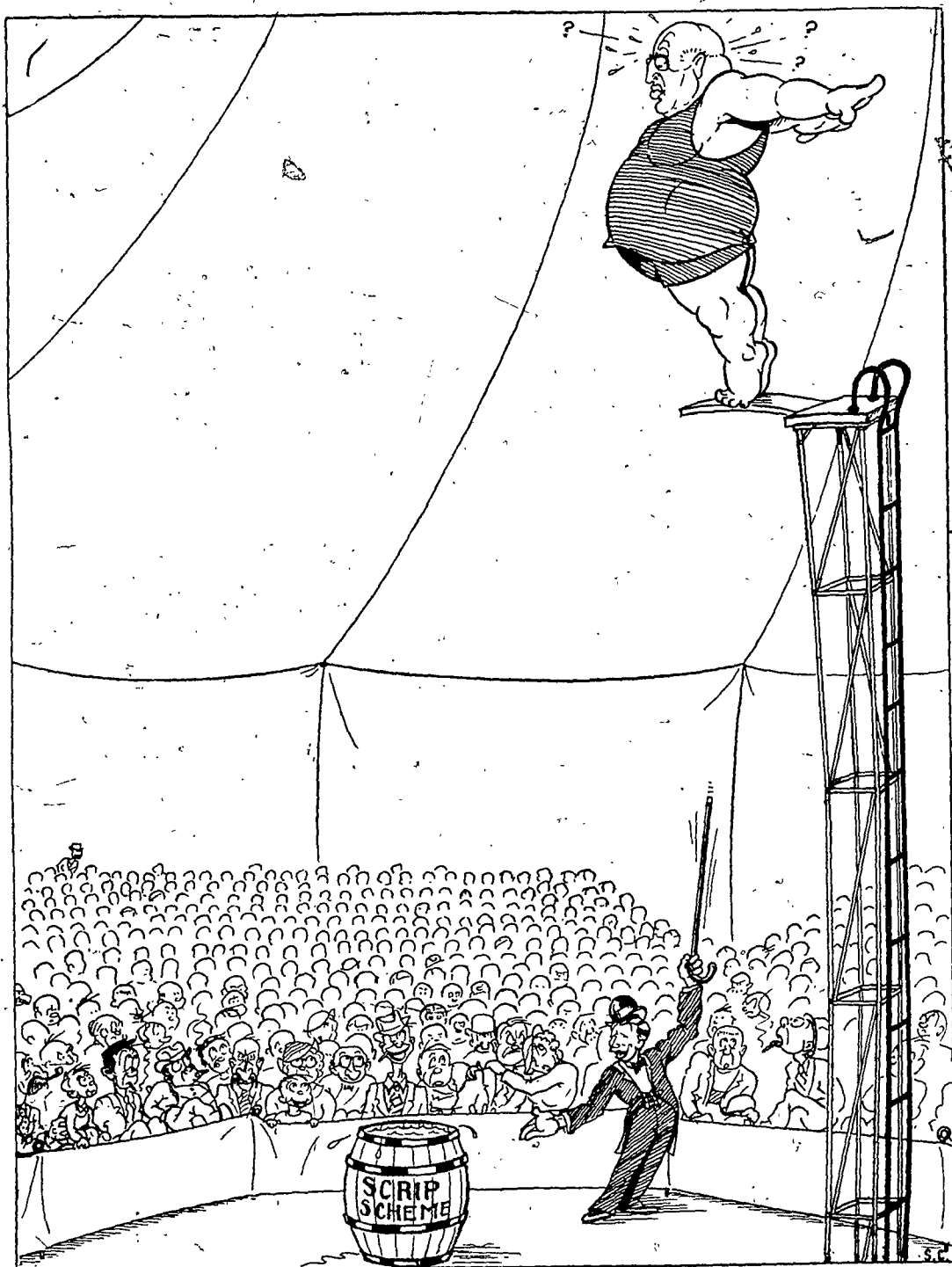


PREMIER ABERHART: "I never thought so many questions could be asked concerning so simple a matter."

TEN days later found Mr. Aberhart still trying, unsuccessfully, to sell his scrip plan to Alberta cities. Members of Alberta's city councils were frankly skeptical of the plan and Mr. Aberhart's answers to numerous questions were not exactly enlightening. He maintained that it was all very simple and Mr. Cameron attempted to assist with the above explanation of perpetual motion. (June 27, 1936.)

TIGHT BINDING

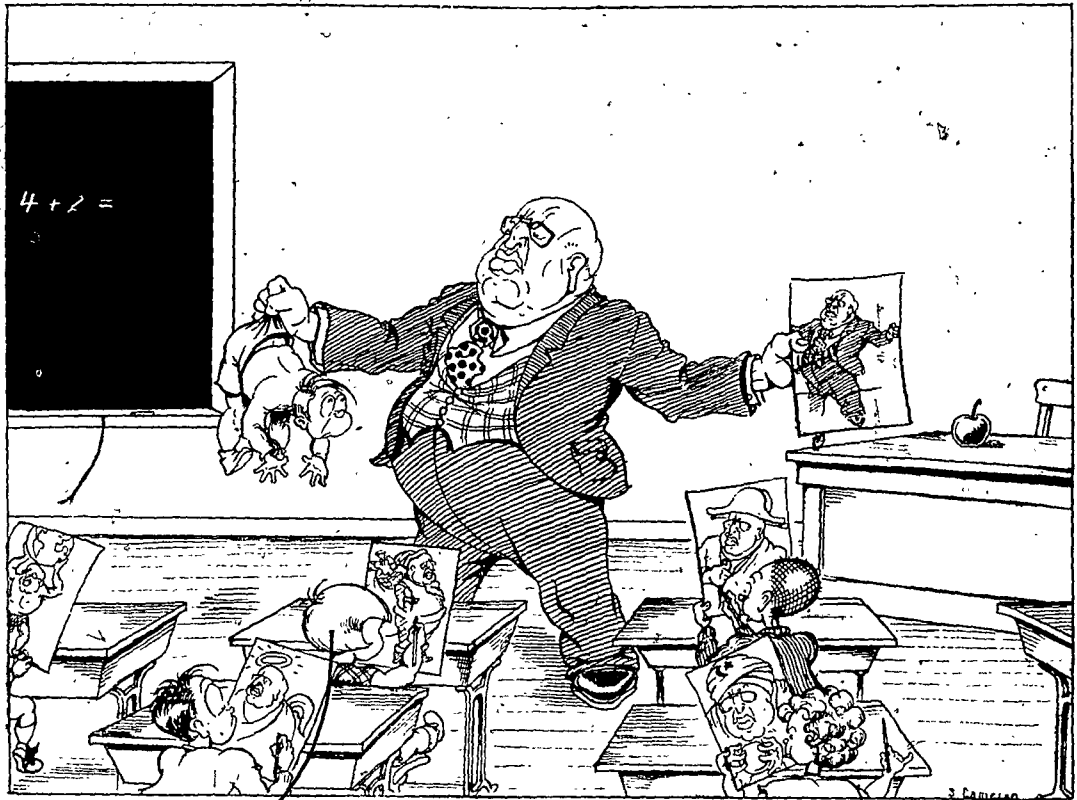
THE NEW ACT. "WILL SHE DO IT?"



The minister declared the government would proceed very carefully with the issue of certificates (scrip). "The worst enemies of the plan were not those who opposed it, but those who wanted the government to go too fast with it," he declared.

MR. ABERHART'S apparent reluctance to proceed with the scrip plan brought back to the cartoonist's mind the old-time diving-girl who used to travel the country fairs with her high diving act. Sometimes the diver used to teeter on the board for a considerable time before finally taking the plunge. "Don't rush me," the premier said. (July 4, 1936.)

THE CENSOR



ALBERTA newspapers freely criticized the record of the government at the end of its first year in office. Mr. Aberhart finally announced that he was going to consider press licensing legislation. To the cartoonist it appeared as if Mr. Aberhart were under the impression that he was back in his school room and that he was going to punish little Johnny for drawing him too true to life. (October 6, 1936.)

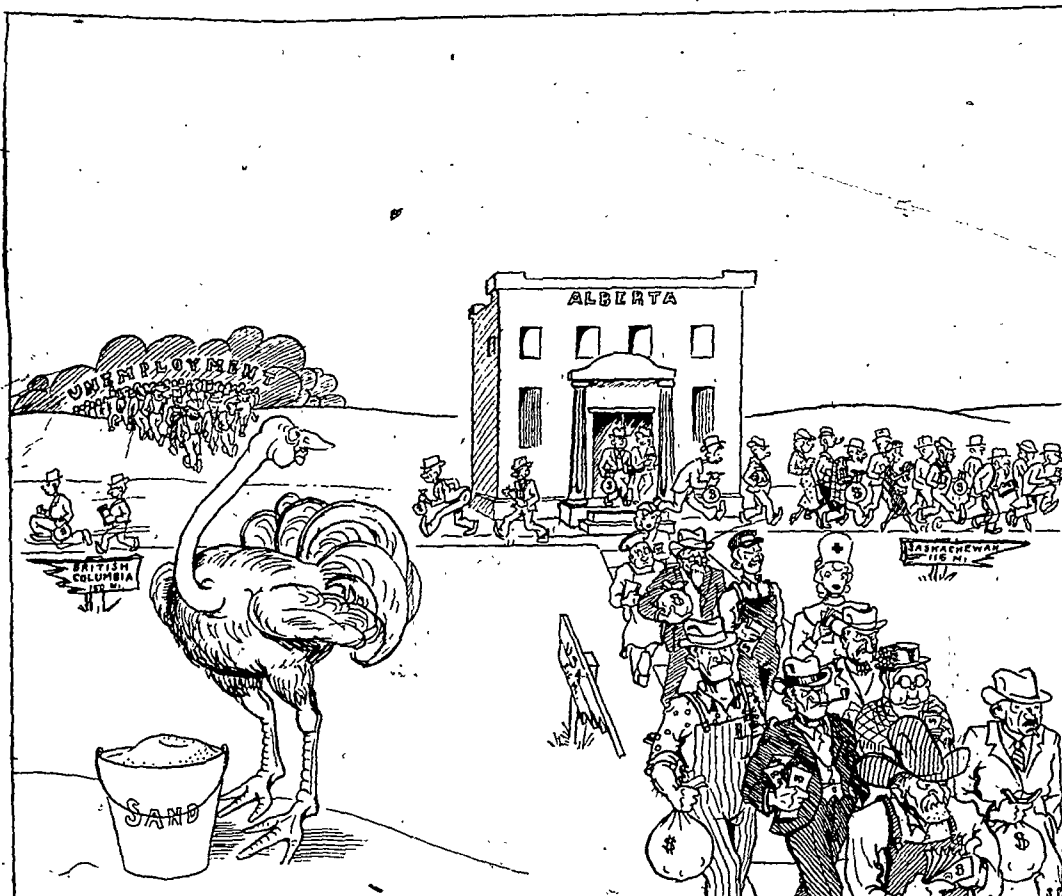
WATERED STOCK



EARLY in 1936, the Alberta "Social Credit" League announced that they had secured control of the Calgary Albertan. All "social creditors" were urged to buy stock in the newspaper. On the eve of Mr. Aberhart's return from a holiday at the coast in September, 1936, "social creditors" were urged to "stand by for an important announcement." The broadcast was confined to a plea by Mr. Aberhart to his followers to purchase stock in the Albertan. Cameron was somewhat amused by the spectacle of the teacher-preacher-premier turning stock salesman. (October 8, 1936.)

TIGHT BINDING

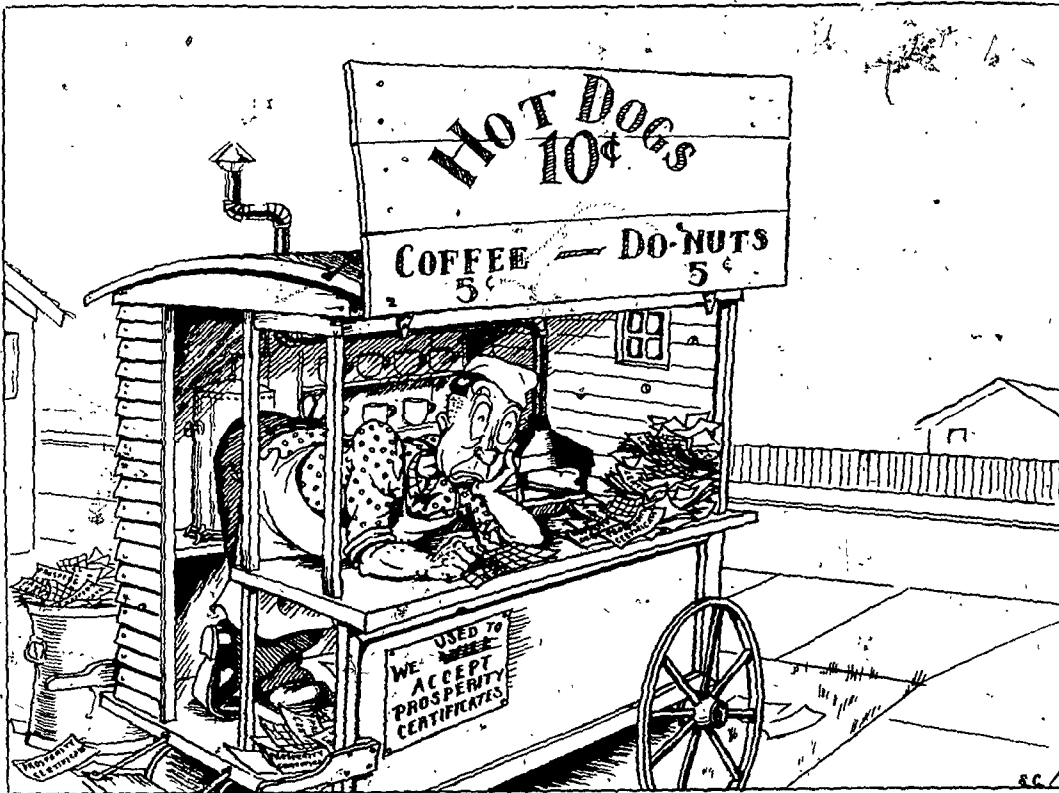
IT'S AN OLD AFRICAN CUSTOM



THE BIRD (preparing to go into his act): "I don't believe it, so I won't comment."

ALARMED by reports that the government thought of attaching bank accounts and securities, Albertans began to transfer their bank accounts and securities to other provinces. "It isn't true," Mr. Aberhart said. Several days later he admitted that there had been a flight of capital from the province but blamed the newspapers for it. Hence the cartoonist's revival of the old story about the ostrich hiding his head in the sand. (October 10, 1936.)

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF

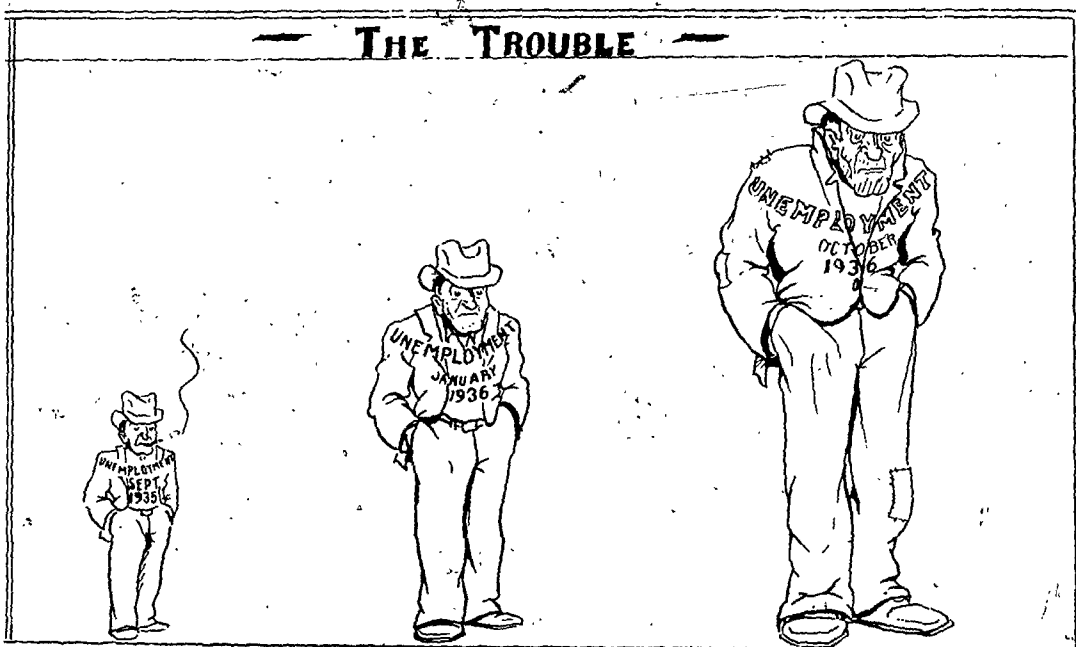


DOOINED to failure, even before it was launched, by the refusal of wholesalers and retailers to accept the certificates, the government's scrip scheme began to hit a new low. The Premier chided his followers for refusing to accept scrip. The plight of the bologna merchant who traded his bologna sandwiches for bologna dollars only to find out that he could not purchase new bologna with the certificates, is depicted by the cartoonist. The situation became so serious that Mr. Aberhart intimated at Coronation that he might have to throw up his hands if more co-operation was not forthcoming. (October 19, 1936.)

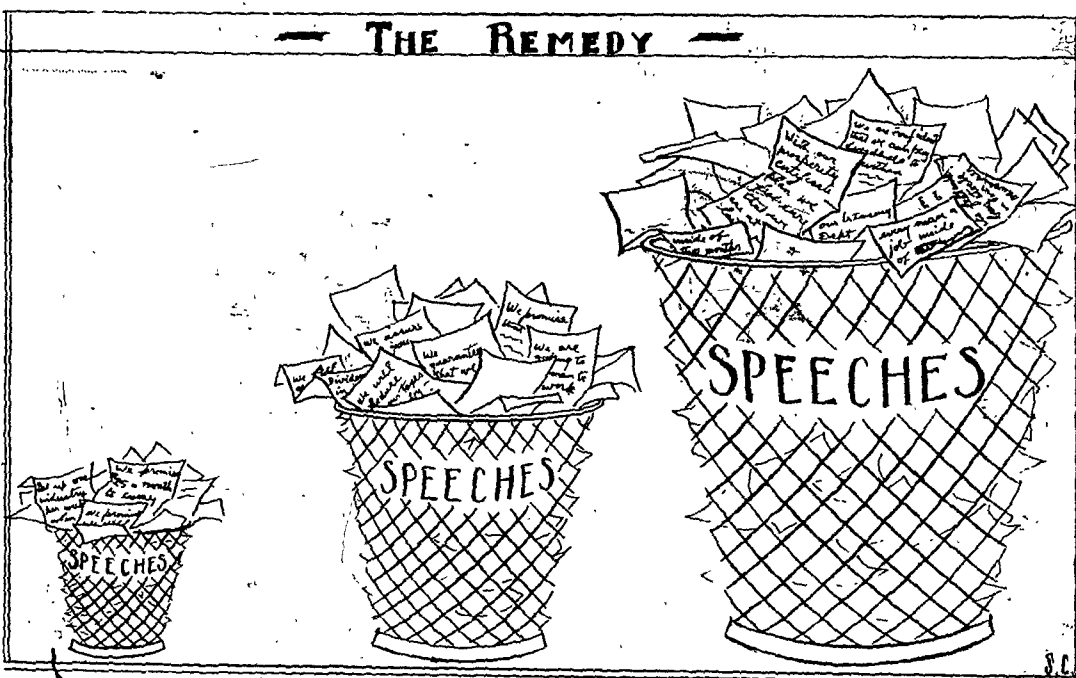
TIGHT BINDING

ALBERTA TAKES HER MEDICINE

THE TROUBLE

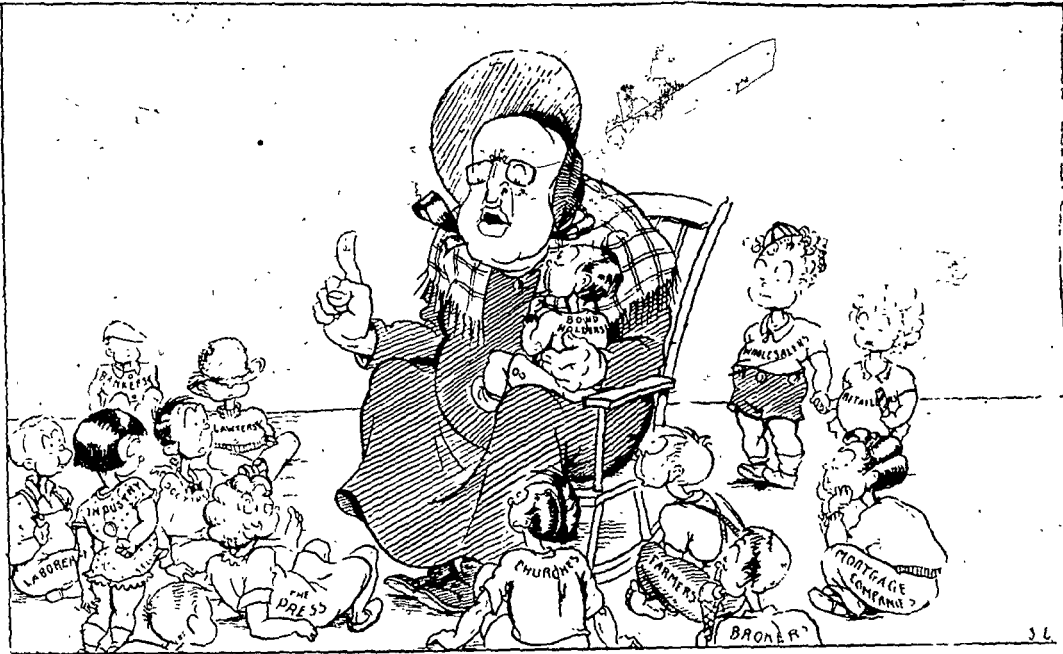


THE REMEDY



WHILE Mr. Aberhart and his cohorts were telling the people of Alberta about the prosperity which would come to the province with the implementation of "social credit" promises, Alberta's unemployment totals climbed steadily. A new high in unemployment was reached in the winter of 1936. Prompted by concern over the jobless relief situation, "Social Credit" party splits were reported from various points. The government's answer to increasing unemployment was still more speeches. (October 21, 1936.)

MOTHER KNOWS BEST



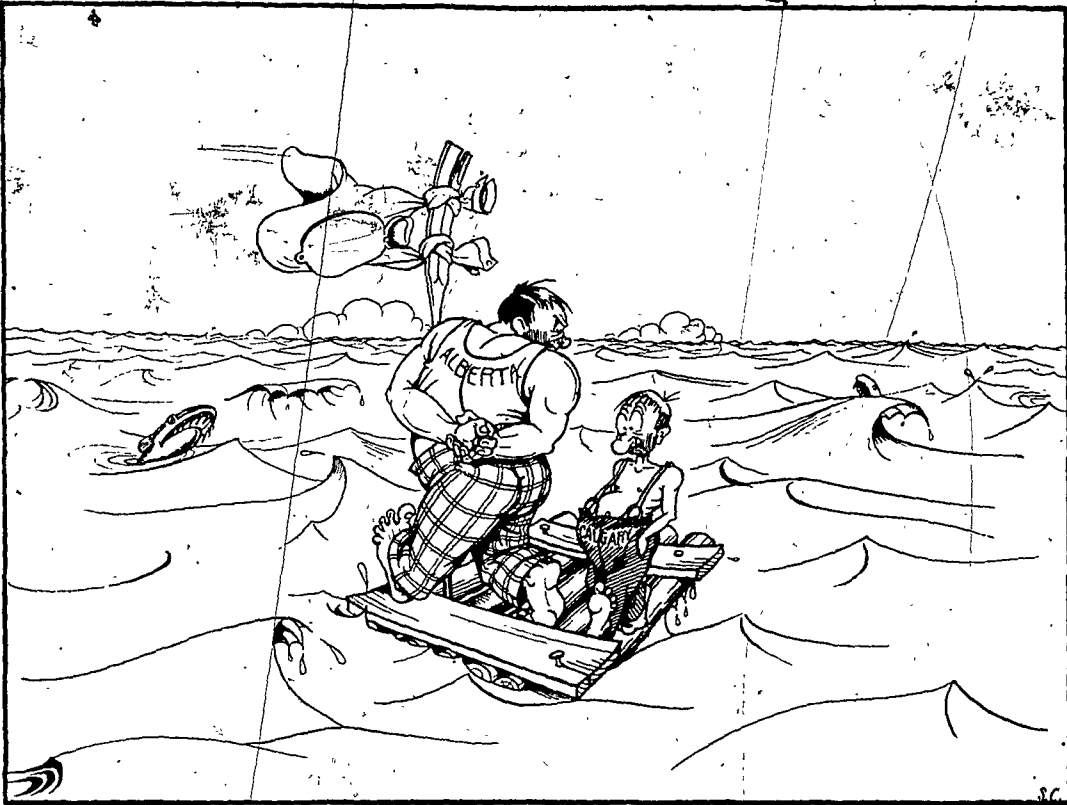
PREMIER ABERHART'S Sunday broadcasts from the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute continued during the year. Hardly a Sunday passed without the Premier lecturing some section of the community for failing to co-operate with the government. Bondholders, newspapers, wholesalers, retailers, mortgage companies, farmers and even the churches came in for a share of the Premier's verbal onslaught. To the cartoonist it was just another case of "Mother Knows Best." (October 23, 1936.)

TIGHT BINDING

A black and white cartoon illustration of a courtroom scene. A judge sits at a desk on the right, looking on. A man in a striped suit stands in the center, gesturing. A man in a plaid shirt sits next to him, shouting. A group of men in suits sit in the foreground, looking on. Two men in uniforms stand in the background. The scene is set in a room with arched windows and a statue of Lady Justice on the wall.

MR. ABERHART'S conviction that all those who are not in favor of "Social Credit" Government policies are "viciously" against them is reflected in the cartoon above. Here the cartoonist places the Premier in the role of the accuser, prosecutor, judge, court reporter, court orderlies, and the jury. And the verdict? — Eminently just, and satisfactory! (October 29, 1936.)

AFLOAT ON A SEA OF DEBT

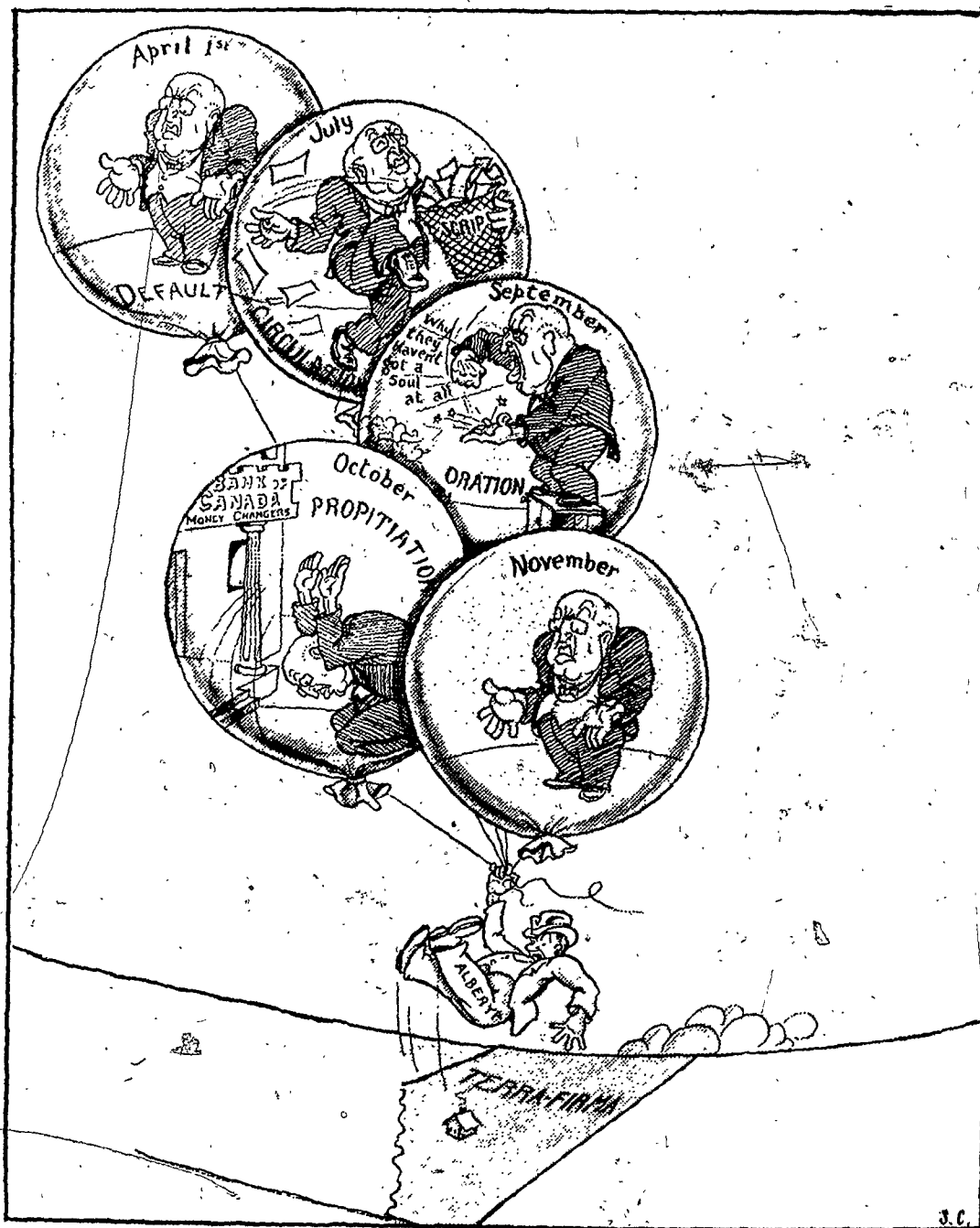


ALBERTA TO CALGARY: "Would you kindly stop following me around?"

ALBERTA'S credit in the financial world slowly crumpled as bond issue after bond issue was allowed to default. Alberta cities also faced financial difficulties and for a time Calgary and Edmonton seemed compelled to follow the province around in a blind circle. The whimsical aspect of this situation was seen by the cartoonist, and Calgarians laughed despite the seriousness of the situation. (October 30, 1936.)

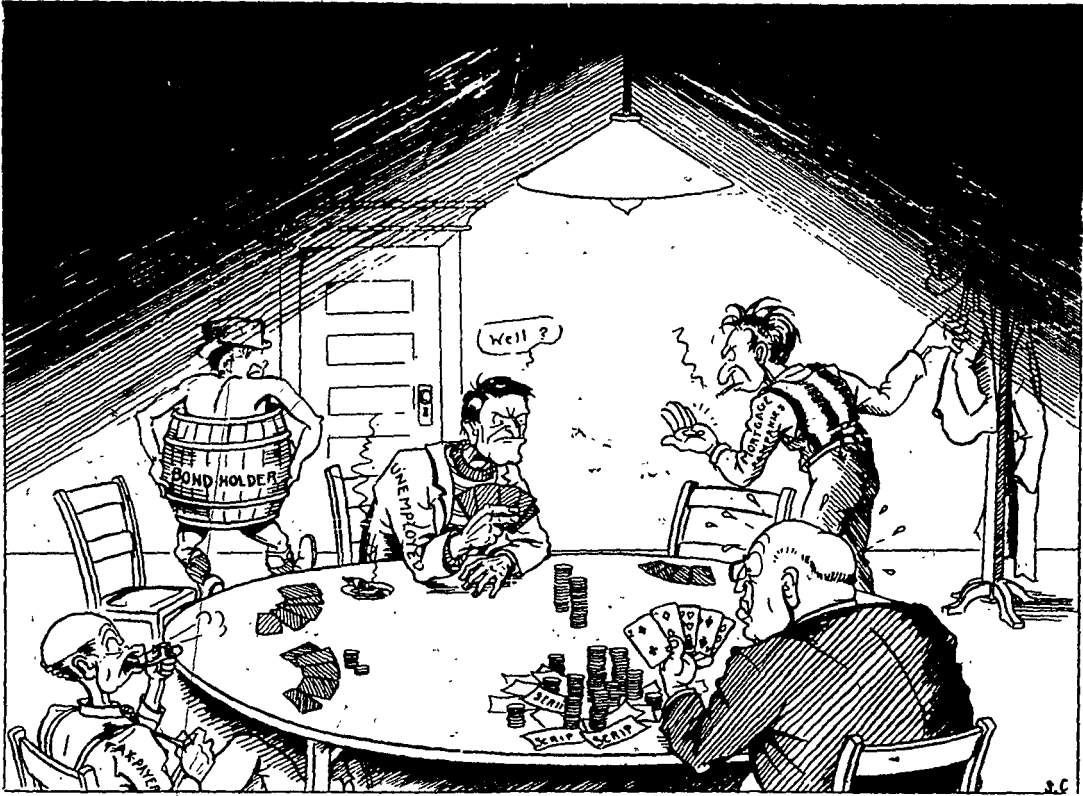
TIGHT BINDING

THE NEW ECONOMICS — OR ONWARD AND UPWARD



FROM the months of April to November, 1936, the Premier and his government traveled the circular road from default to default. He criticized the banks because they did not come to the government's aid when bond default signalled the break-down of real credit in April. In July he told the faithful, "We do not need the banks" — the "scrip" issue would provide additional purchasing power. He blamed the banks afresh when the scrip venture failed, and then pleaded with the Bank of Canada for a loan when another bond default loomed in November. In December there was less prospect than ever of dividends by Christmas as had been freely promised. (November 4, 1936.)

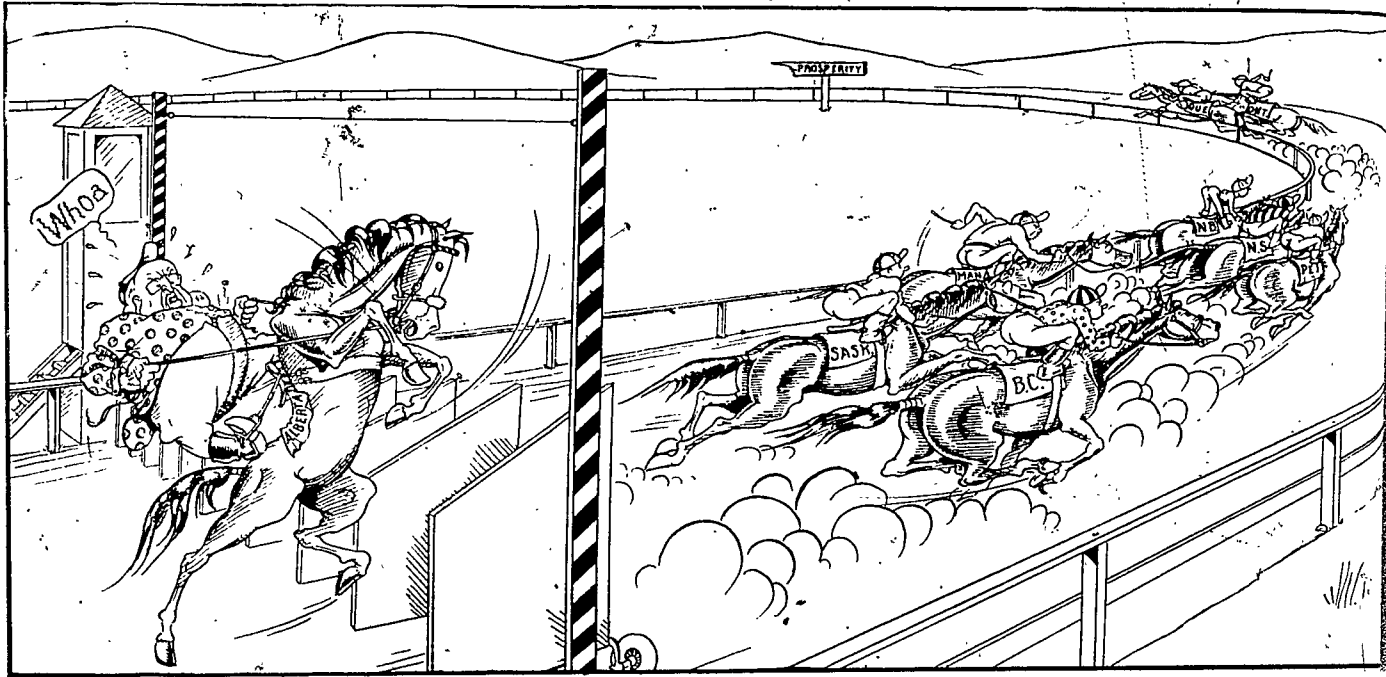
THE SHOWDOWN



MR. ABERHART'S sham battle with the bond holders and the mortgage companies, and his scrip campaign overshadowed the unemployment situation for a time. But one day the unemployed decided that it was time for a "showdown." They invaded the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute on Sunday, August 8, and listened to Mr. Aberhart acknowledge their presence and promise increased assistance. The Premier was provided with a police escort when he left the building. The cartoonist apparently felt that the government was caught with a pair of deuces. (November 12, 1936.)

TIGHT BINDING

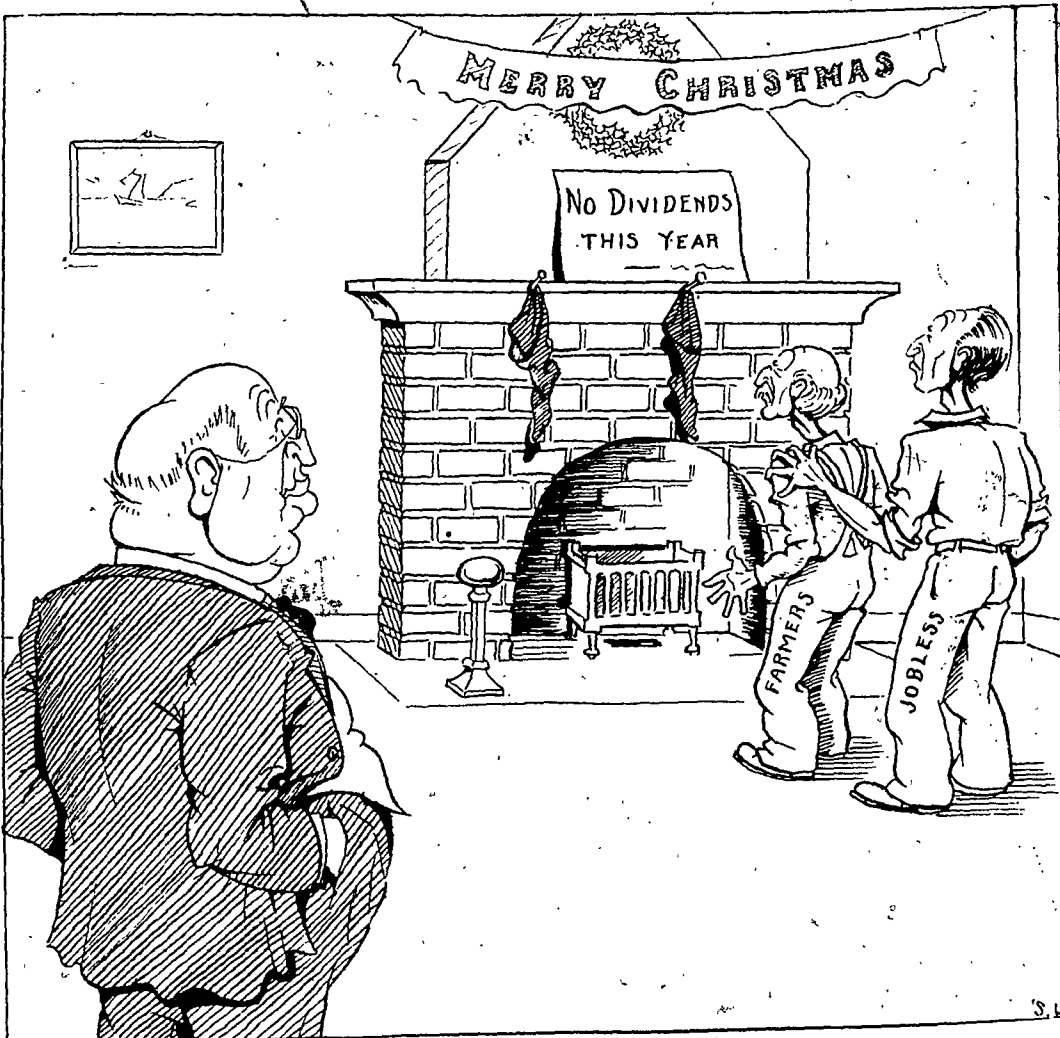
THE RECOVERY STAKES



MR. ABERHART (in last Sunday's broadcast): "You know as well as I do that I never asked or desired to be appointed Premier of this province."

WHILE Alberta was floundering, other provinces of Canada were forging ahead. To the cartoonist it seemed just another case of one of the favorites being "left at the post" in the Recovery Stakes. The horse wanted to start but the inexperienced jockey couldn't. Said Mr. Aberhart in explaining his predicament, "You know as well as I do that I never asked or desired to be appointed Premier of this province." (November 14, 1936.)

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



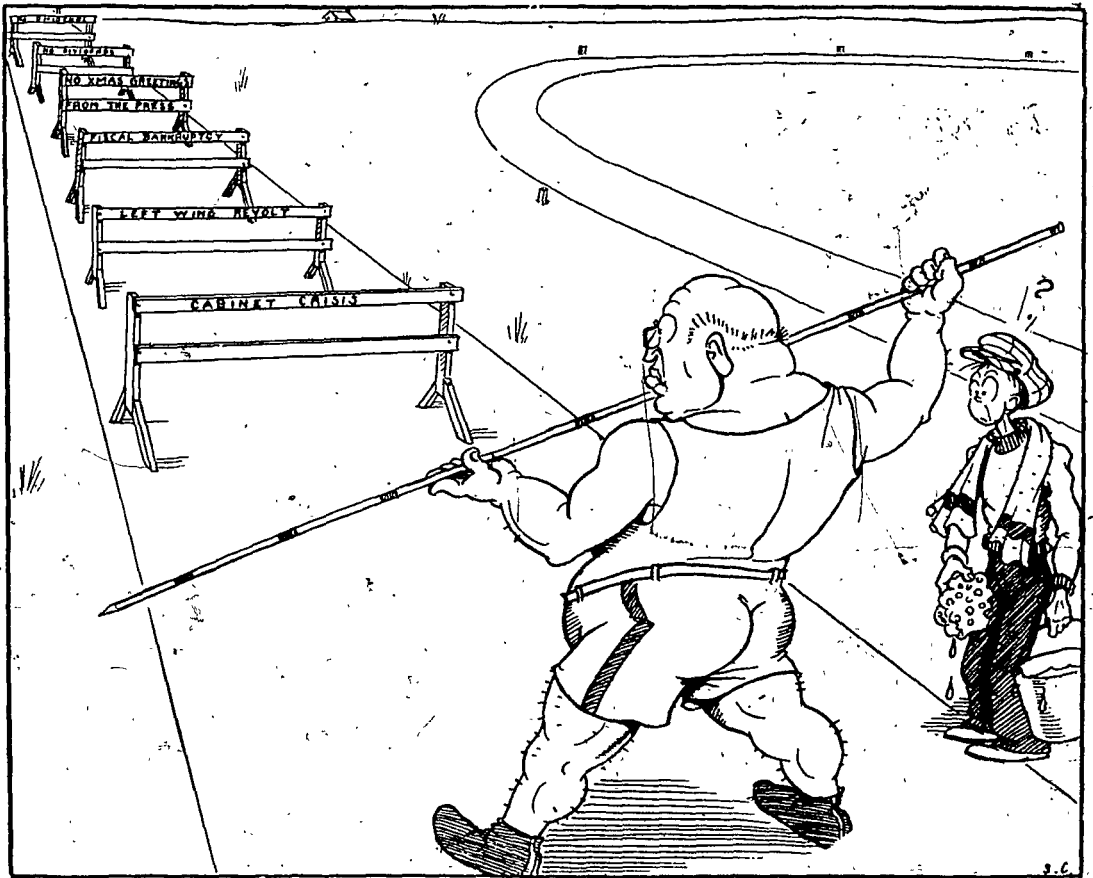
With acknowledgment to E. Carter, Crossfield.

FATHER (jocularly): "You boys should be old enough to know there is no Santa Claus."

FAITHFUL party followers were given another shock during Christmas week when Mr. Aberhart entrained for Vancouver for a holiday without making any announcement concerning long promised dividends. In July Mr. Aberhart had said: "Wouldn't it be lovely if we could pay dividends at the end of twelve months?" In December he had stopped talking on the subject, and all in all the cartoonist foresaw an empty Christmas stocking for the rank and file of the "Social Credit" Party. (December 22, 1936.)

TIGHT BINDING

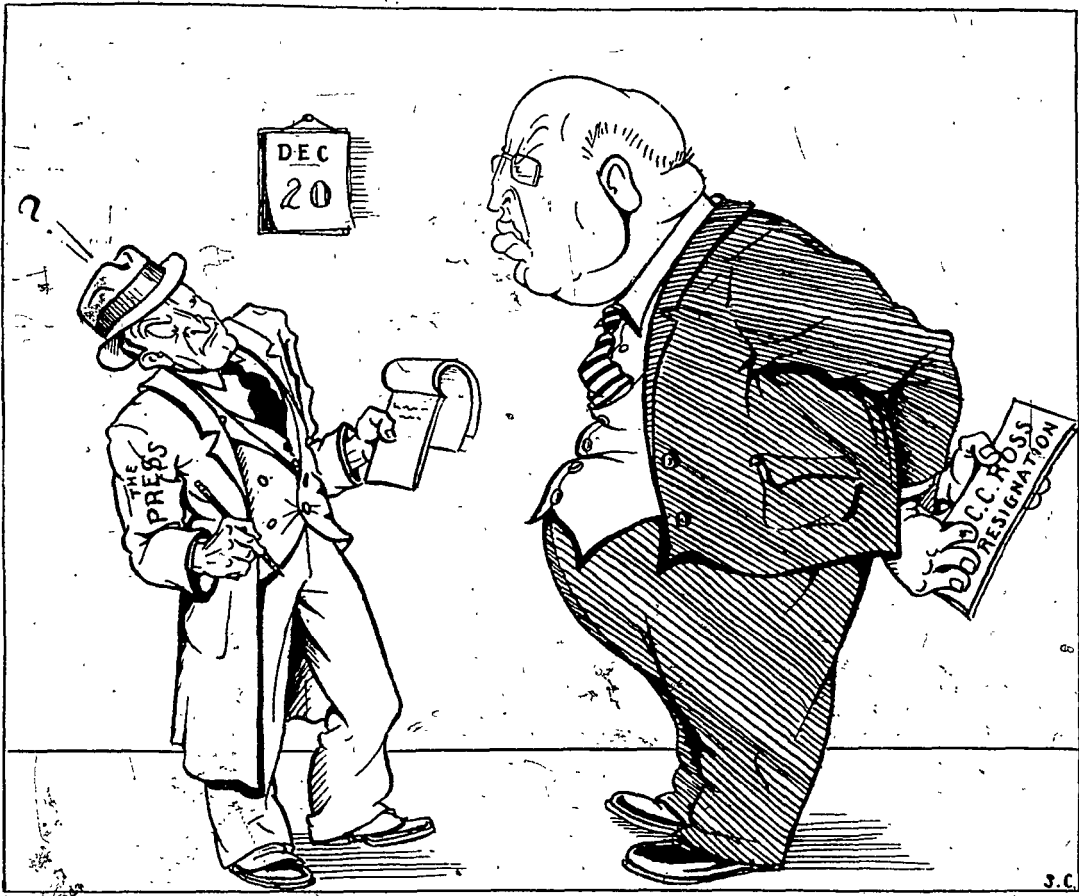
"UNEASY LIES THE HEAD OF ANY GOVERNMENT"



MR. ABERHART (clutching his pole): "It is simply one awful thing after another."

WRANGLES with his cabinet ministers, incipient revolt in the ranks of his followers, and clashes between John Hargrave, volunteer adviser to the provincial government, and Major C. H. Douglas, founder of "Social Credit," were at this time causing the Premier grave concern. It appeared to the cartoonist that Mr. Aberhart was about to go over the hurdles and he aptly equipped the weighty Premier with very slender support. The government leader was feeling a little sorry for himself, he had murmured over the air about the failure of the Alberta newspapers to wish him a "Merry Christmas," and he told his followers at this time, "It is simply one awful thing after another." (January 7, 1937.)

THE COVER-UP



MR. ABERHART: "Do you expect me to make a statement on a rumor such as that?"

THOUGH it was known to the newspapers on December 20 that Hon. C. C. Ross, one of the ablest Ministers in Mr. Aberhart's cabinet, had placed his resignation in the hands of the Premier, the latter declined to acknowledge the fact. He was then holidaying at Vancouver, the Minister's resignation reposing in his pocket. Nevertheless, when pressed for a statement by the newspapers, he replied: "Do you expect me to make a statement on a rumor such as that?" Three weeks later Mr. Ross's resignation was such an open secret that only the Premier seemed unaware of it. (January 15, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

HOPE DEFERRED

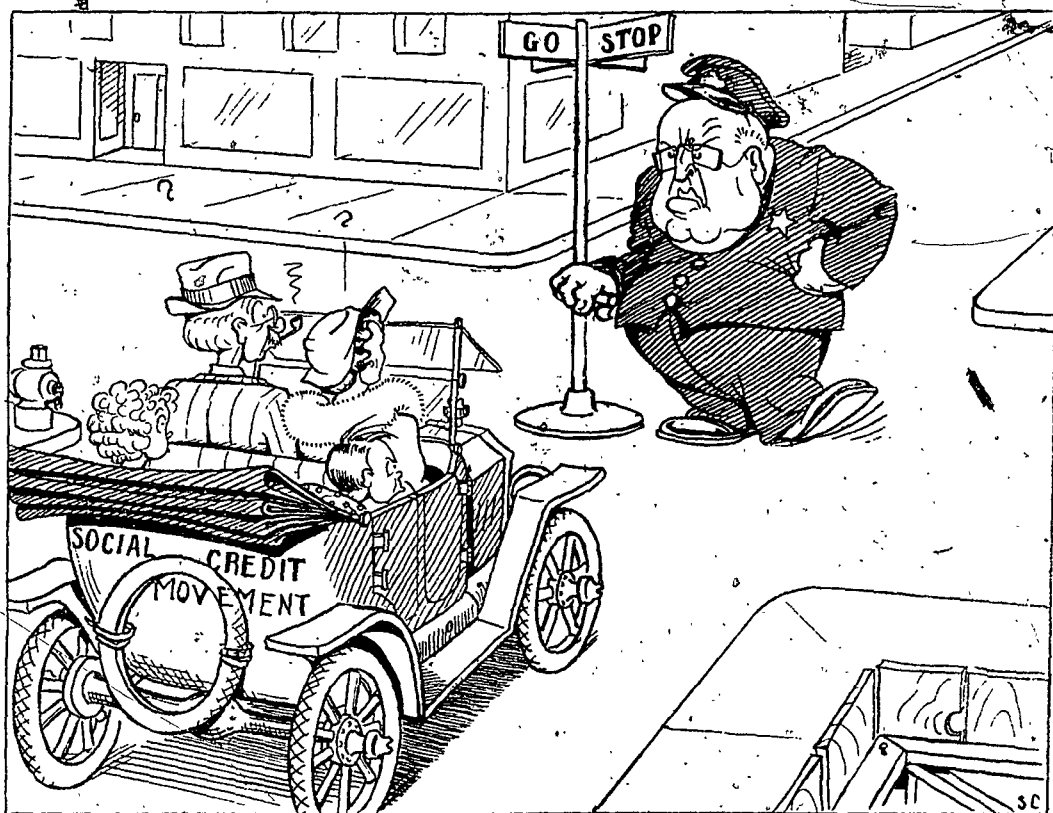


MR. BONES: "Now Professuh, can you tell me the diffunce between producin' fo' profit an' existin' for dividends?"

PROF. ORTHODOX ANONYMOUS (Absent-mindedly): "At least two years."

ONE of the most ingenious bits of government propaganda was a series of discussions at the Prophetic Bible Institute between the Premier and an unnamed "stooge" called Professor Orthodox Anonymous, in which the Premier always bested the arguments of the professor with his devastating wit. At this date, however, the Premier was not quite so nimble in explaining why his government had failed to implement its pre-election promises. The government should be given at least two years before being criticized, he pleaded. (January 18, 1937.)

"STOP, GO AND REVERSE"

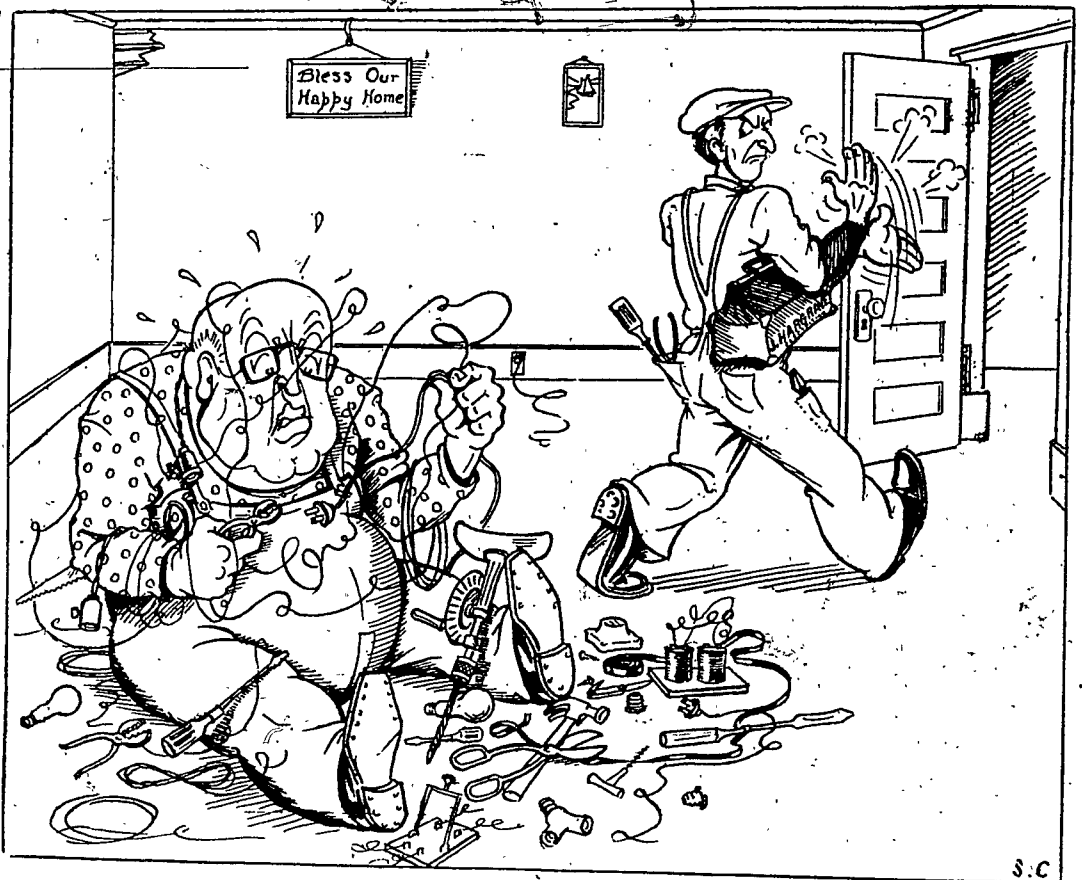


Party in the car: "Hey, there, chief, what are we supposed to do?"

ON January 25, John Hargrave, government advisor from London, concluded he could no longer get along with his "Social Credit" colleagues and resigned. Mr. Hargrave was painfully outspoken in his denunciation of government policies, and on his departure declared: "I've lost all confidence in this government, operating as it does in starts, stops and reversals." There was more than a suggestion that many "social crediters" shared Mr. Hargrave's opinion. Hence the query of the party in the car — "Hey, there, chief, what are we supposed to do?" (January 26, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

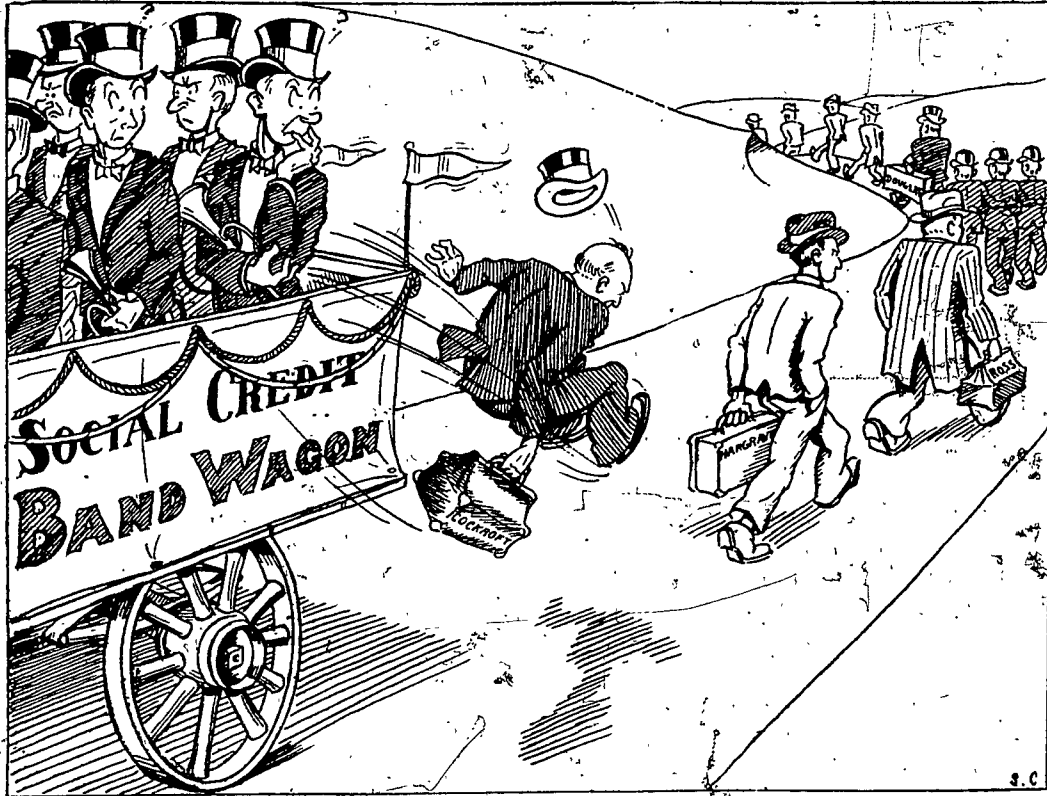
THE EXPERT WAS CALLED IN



On August 15, 1935, Mr. Aberhart said: "You don't have to know all about Social Credit before you vote for it. You don't have to understand electricity to make use of it, for you know that experts have put the system in and all you have to do is to push the button and you get light. So all you have to do about Social Credit is to cast your ballot for it, and we'll get experts to put the system in."

MR. HARGRAVE'S abrupt departure had many repercussions, notably among government followers. The sad dilemma of the government, which had quarreled with its expert, appealed to the cartoonist. He also recalled Mr. Aberhart's statement of August 15, 1935: "You don't have to know all about 'Social Credit' before you vote for it. You don't have to understand electricity to make use of it, for you know that experts have put the system in and all you have to do is to push the button and you get light. So all you have to do about 'Social Credit' is to cast your ballot for it, and we'll get experts to put the system in." (January 30, 1937.)

THE KEYNOTE IN CO-OPERATION

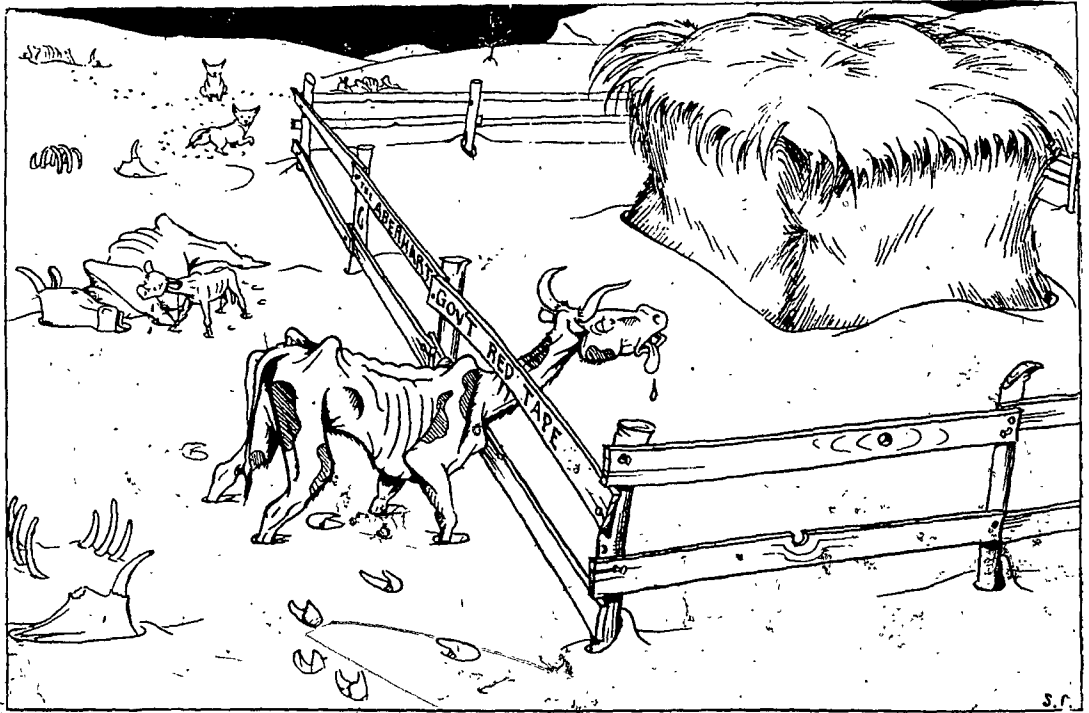


The Aberhart Government sets Alberta an example in harmony.

NOT long after Hargrave resigned as "Social Credit" adviser and Hon. C. C. Ross quit the cabinet ranks, Hon. Charles Cockroft, provincial treasurer, followed their example, resigning on January 29, 1937. The Premier continued to talk of "co-operation" and assured his followers that harmony prevailed in the ranks of the government. These protestations contrasted oddly with the now frequent desertions from the "Social Credit" bandwagon. (February 1, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

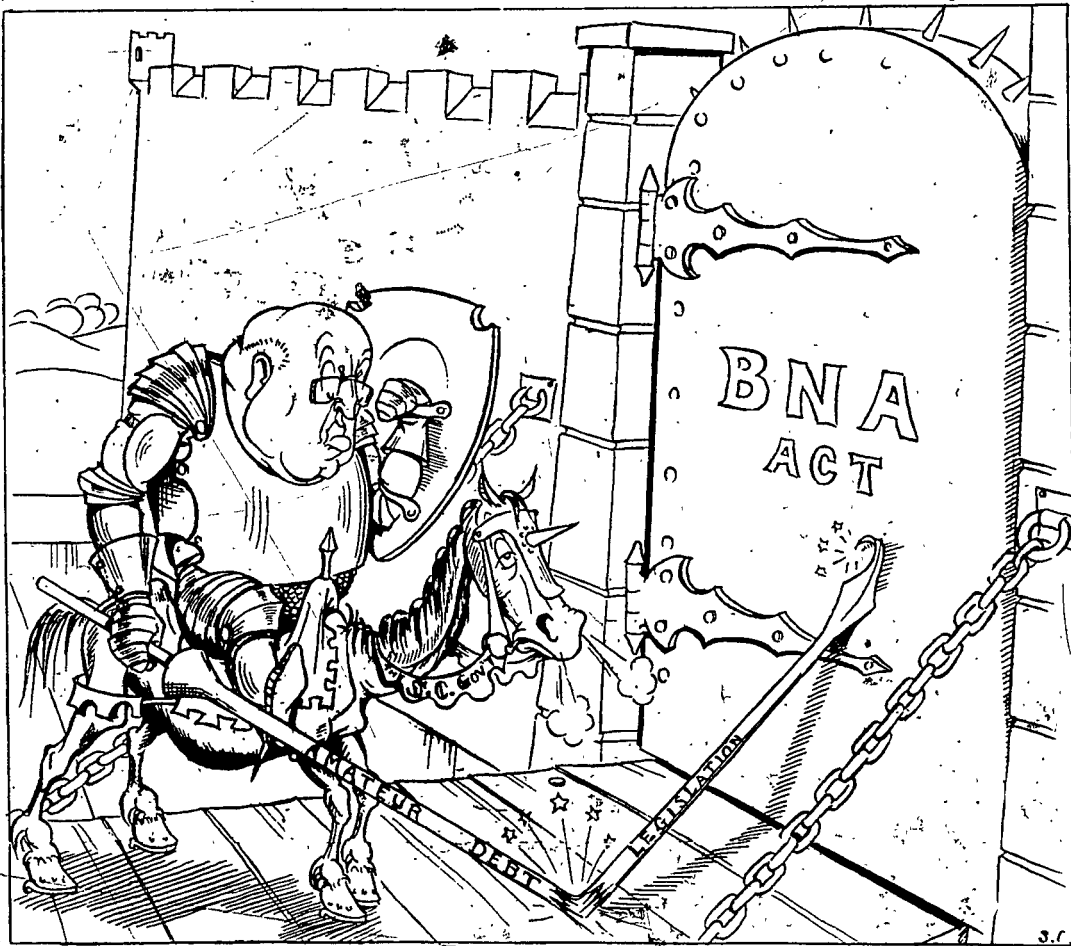
POVERTY IN THE MIDST OF PLENTY



Cattle in Southern Alberta are starving today while an abundance of feed stands waiting for a market in the north and central sections of the province. Bungling and delay in administration of the free freight plan are largely blamed for this situation.

THE phrase "Poverty in the midst of plenty," was frequently on the Premier's tongue during his election campaign and its repetition was calculated to convince the voters, particularly those in the drouth areas, of their sad plight. In the winter of 1936-37 an accute shortage of cattle fodder in the drouth area caused the death of hundreds of animals. At the same time an abundance of feed stood waiting for a market in the north and central sections of the province. Bungling and delay in administration of the free freight plan was held largely responsible for the tragedy. (February 20, 1937.)

DON QUIXOTE RIDES AGAIN



PREMIER ABERHART'S tilts at the "money barons" were later to develop into legislation designed to cripple the financial institutions of the province and gave grave concern to thousands of small investors throughout Canada who had put their faith and cash in Alberta's investments. But the British North America Act proved a bulwark against amateur debt legislation. Court after court declared government debt legislation invalid or unconstitutional with the result that "Don Quixote" Aberhart ceased to tilt at windmills and turned his blunted lance against the Federal constitution with the results pictured above. (February 27, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

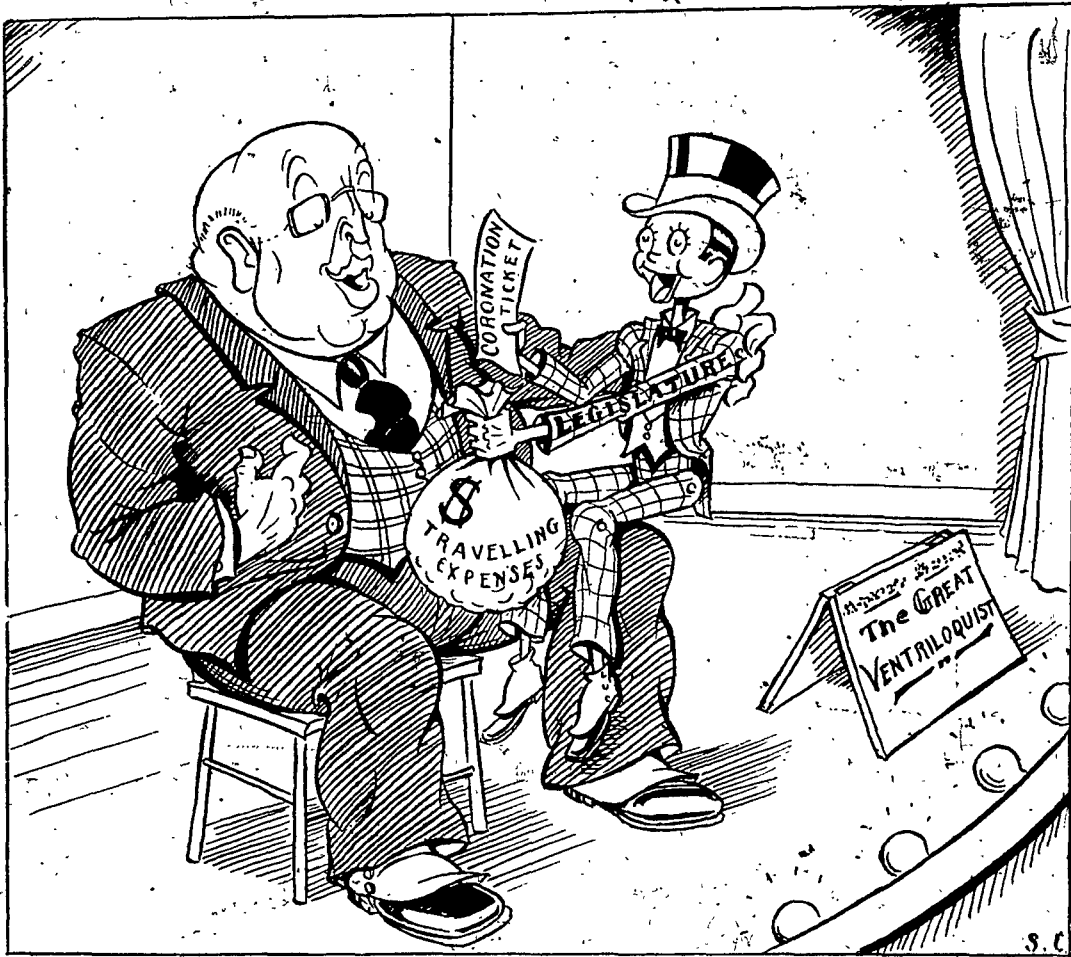
THE GREAT FIGHT FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM



Mr. ABERHART (standing on his own foot): "Opposition and blocking tactics have been even more determined than we had anticipated."

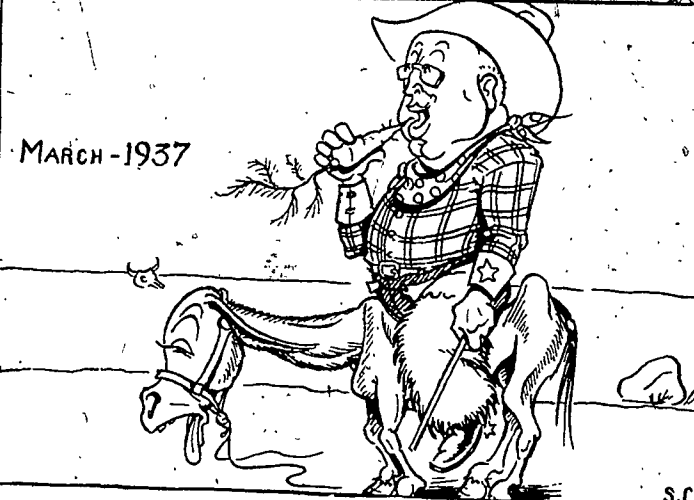
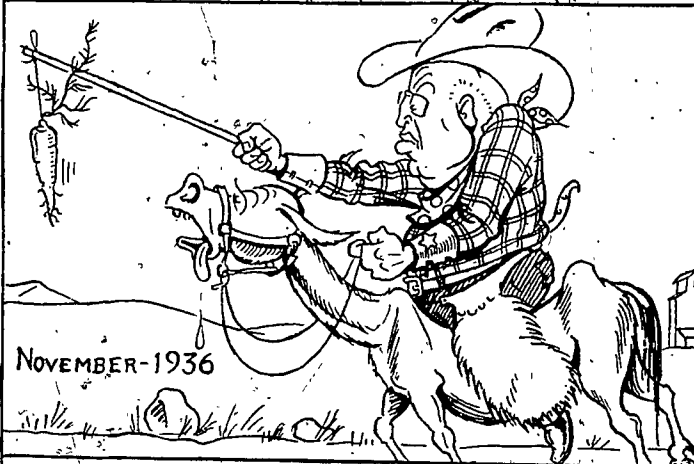
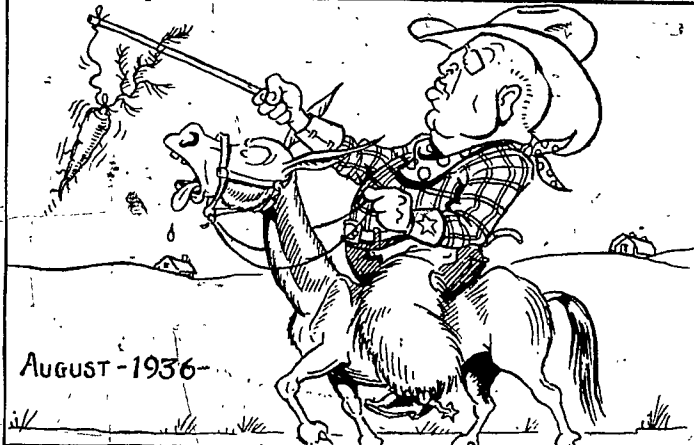
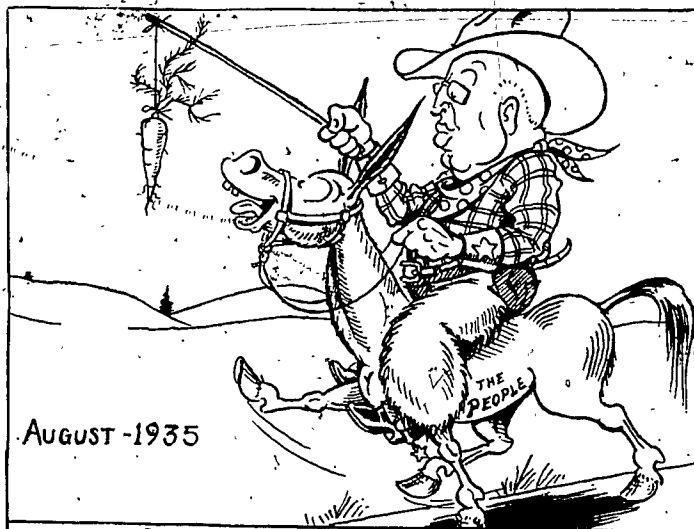
ON April 30, 1937, the Premier came dejectedly to his followers and admitted his failure to pay the promised dividends of \$25 per month after holding office for a year and a half. At the same time he refused to resign. Instead, he asked his followers to tell him by June of the same year what course he should follow. He placed the blame for his failure on his opponents and declared: "Opposition and blocking tactics have been even more determined than we had anticipated." The cartoonist thought he knew where the opposition lay and he illustrated his point clearly. This cartoon caught the interest of many outside the province and was reproduced in the New York Times. (March 1, 1937.)

THE FIRST DIVIDEND



BY March, 1937, wearied of continued insurgency in the government ranks, unkind suggestions from former followers and an unadmitted but obvious futility of purpose, the Premier yearned to "get away from it all," and cast his eyes longingly toward London, home of the Sage of Fig Tree Court. The "Coronation" was approaching, and what more fitting than that Alberta's Premier should represent the province? So tentative steamship reservations were made at Edmonton on February 24. There was need, of course, for travelling expenses, since a Premier could not belittle the province by paying his way out of his own pocket. (March 6, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

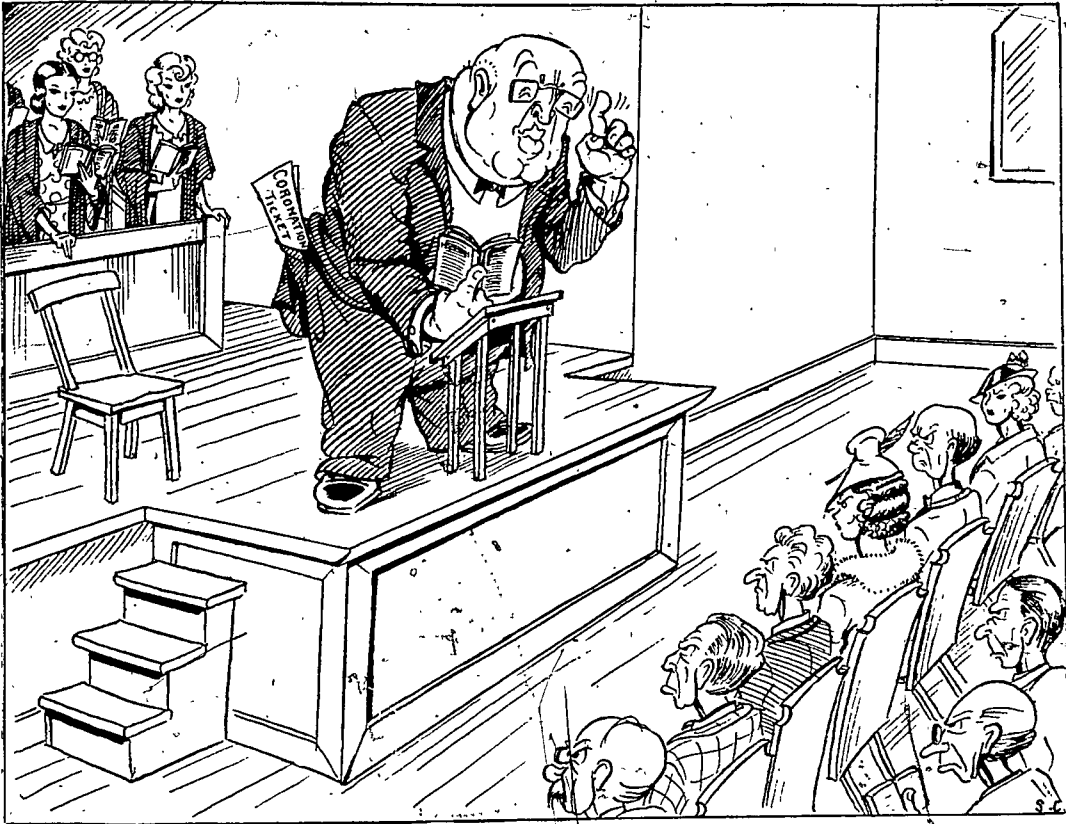


THE ULTIMATE CONSUMER

Or, "A Free Trip to Europe."

THE Premier's ambitions for a jaunt over to the "Coronation" met with a chilly reception from his insurgent followers and a large section of the public. He was unwilling to give up the trip and continued to harbor the idea in spite of plain-spoken criticism. He was successful in having a party caucus name him to represent the province when it met, March 10, but within a day or two there were hints that the matter would be debated on the floor of the Legislature. Questioned by newspapermen, the Premier declined to make a statement. This cartoon clarified the situation. (March 13, 1937.)

"COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS"

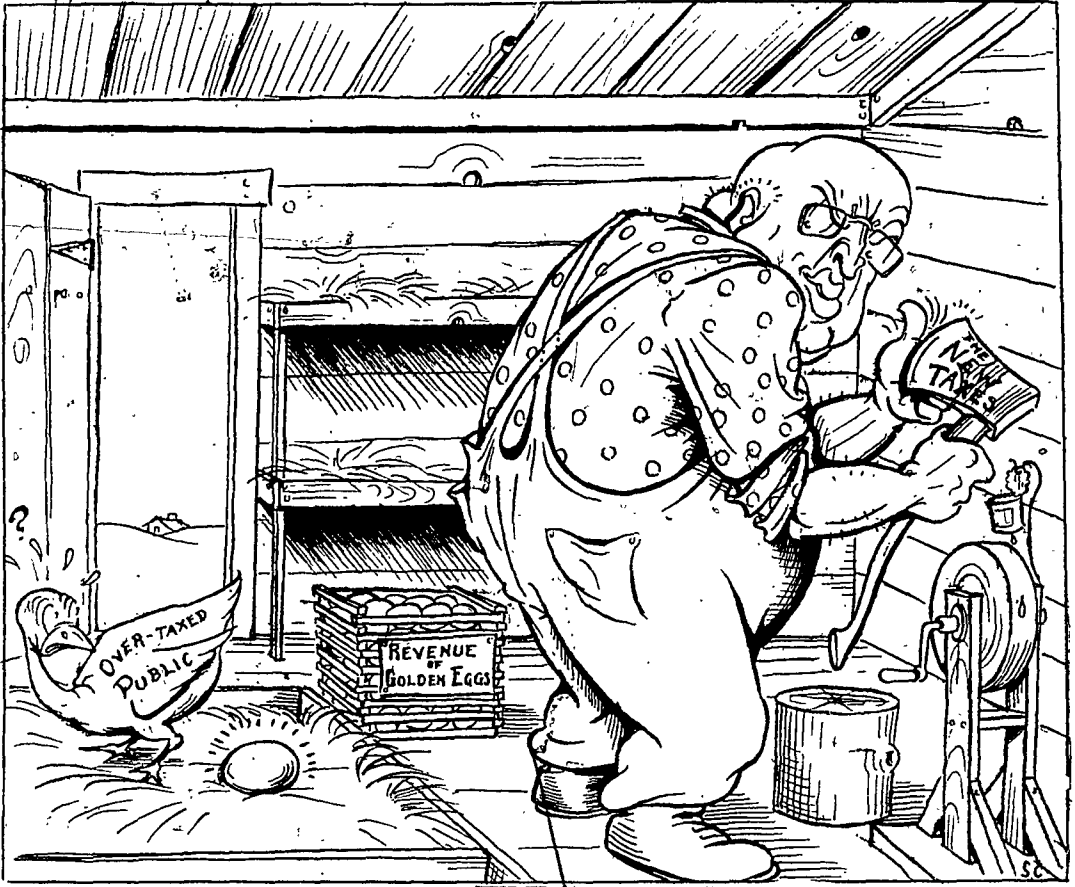


THE PREACHER: "Now I bet some of you sang that verse without thinking of one blessing you've got to be thankful for."

APPARENTLY undisturbed by criticism of his Coronation tour, the Premier continued to ignore comments of both press and public. On March 13 it was learned that the government intended to increase the Premier's expense allowance by \$2,500, presumably to cover cost of a trip to England. Several rebellious "Social Credit" groups in the province openly condemned this move. On March 16 it was announced that the Premier would sail on April 28. On the previous Sunday afternoon he remarked to his followers at the Prophetic Bible Institute: "Now I bet some of you sang that verse without thinking of one blessing you've got to be thankful for." (March 17, 1937.)

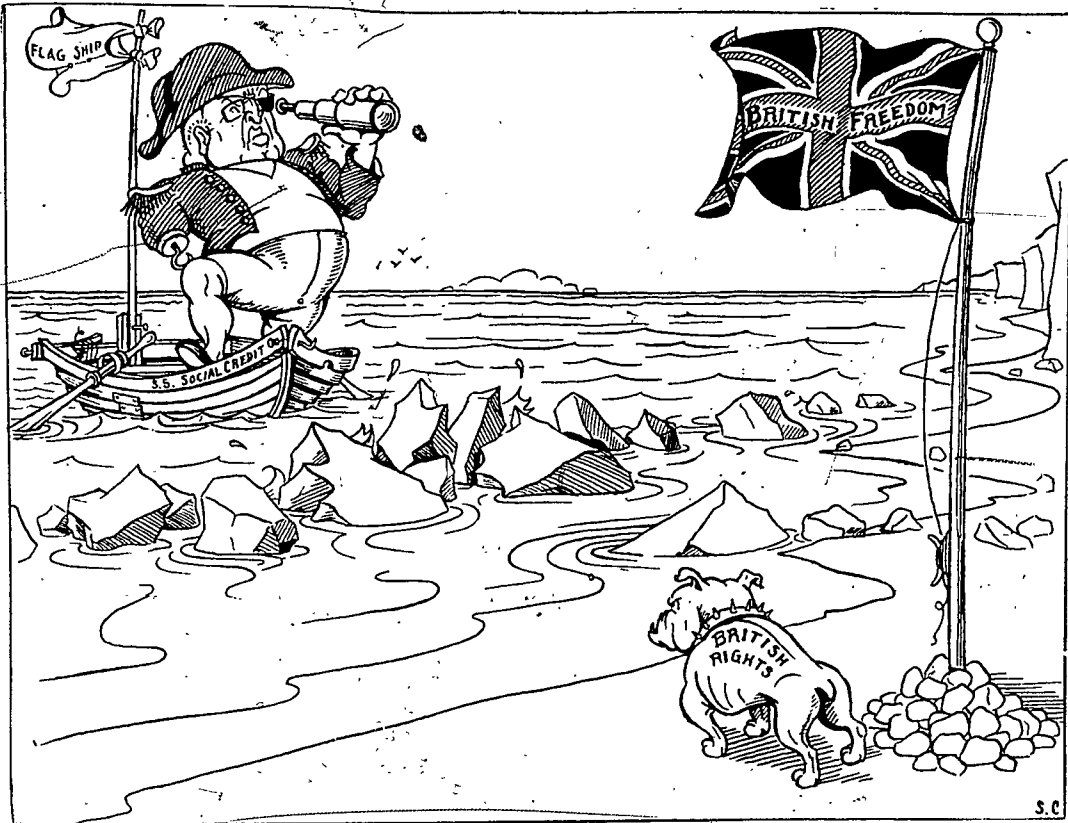
TIGHT BINDING

GETTING READY FOR EASTER



“SOCIAL CREDIT” still unrealized, the government was now proceeding, as formerly, on the despised “orthodox” lines and the budget provided for additional new taxes. The plight of the unhappy taxpayer caught the cartoonist’s imagination. (March 20, 1937.)

HIS BLIND EYE

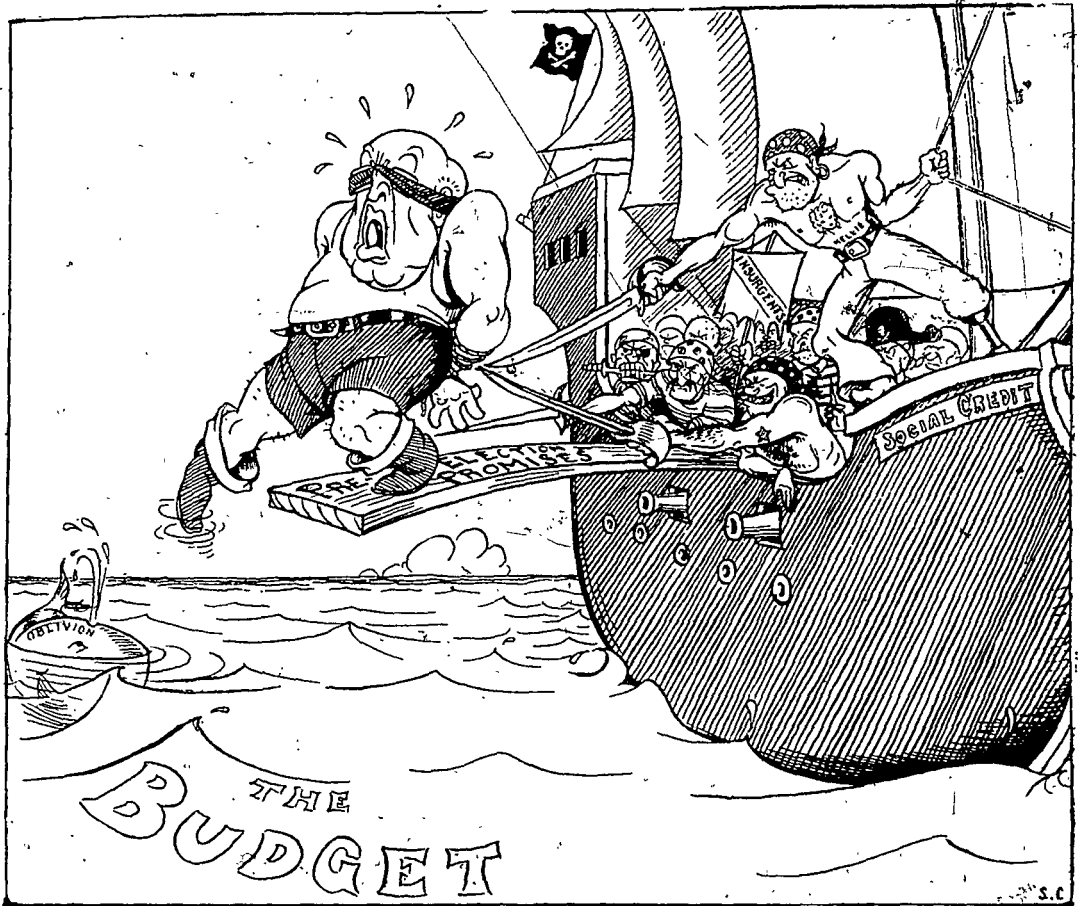


ADMIRAL HORATIO ABERHART: "I do not see any dog." (The Premier in the course of last Sunday's broadcast stated: "As long as the majority say 'carry on' I'll face the foe. Probably like Admiral Nelson I shall put my telescope to my blind eye, as it were," etc., etc.)

PUBLIC opposition to Aberhart policies was now becoming more vocal but the leader declined to take the hint. On Sunday, March 21, he said at the Prophetic Bible Institute: "As long as the majority say 'carry on' I'll face the foe. Probably like Admiral Nelson I shall put my telescope to my blind eye, as it were * * *." (March 23, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

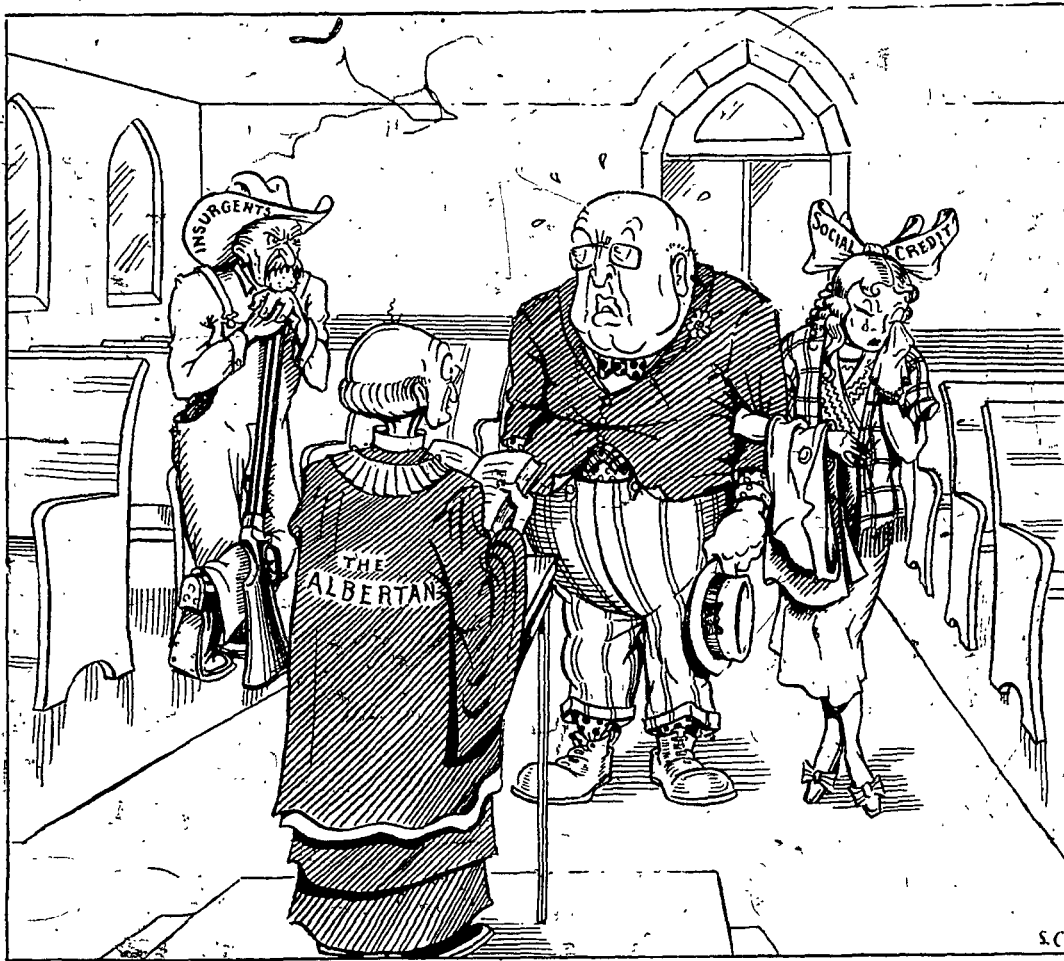
THE END OF THE PLANK



PREMIER ABERHART: "Don't let's quarrel among ourselves, boys."

INSURGENCY was at its height by the end of March, the rebels going so far as to defeat the government on March 25 by voting down a proposal to continue the budget debate. The government was forced to capitulate two days later, suspending the budget and substituting for it provisional estimates. The Premier was forced to play his trump card, threat of resignation if the government were defeated on the budget vote. This seemed to have little effect on the insurgents, who were then gaining strength with a majority of the party behind them. There was open talk of jettisoning Aberhart and setting up a new cabinet. Continuing in nautical vein, the cartoonist depicted the plight of the government leader. (March 27, 1937.)

A PRETTY, BUT QUIET WEDDING

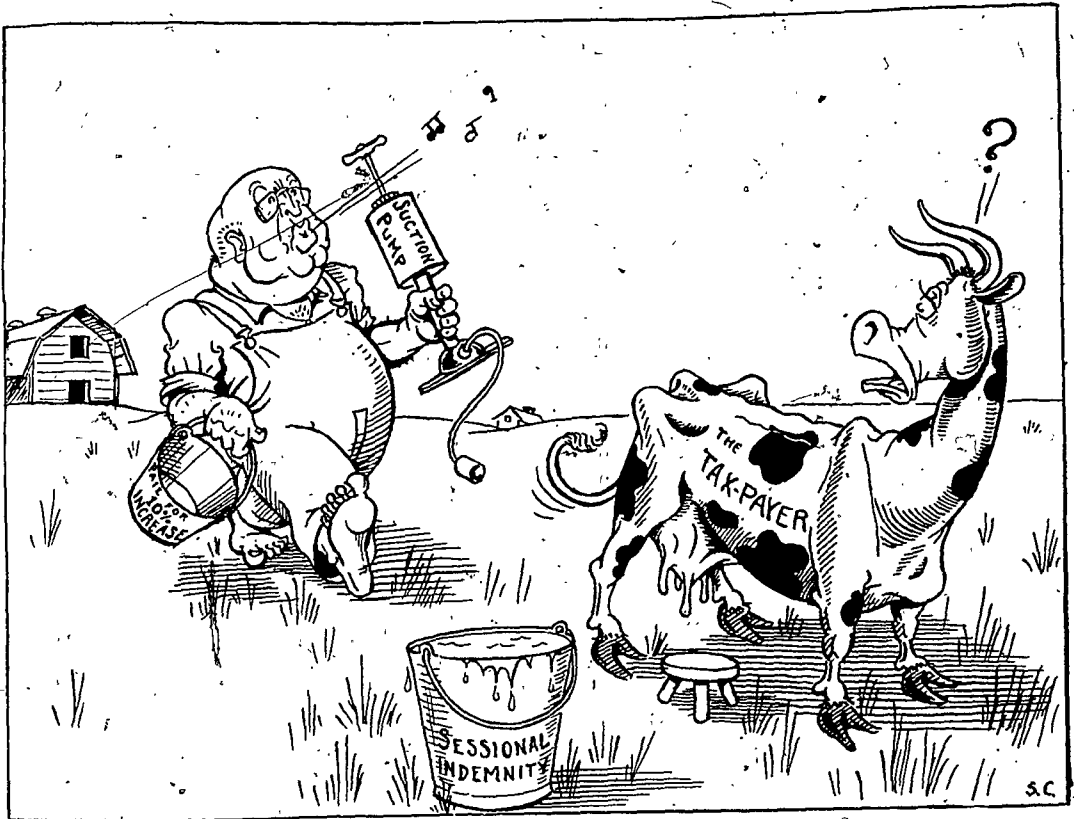


The Lucky Man: "I do."

DETERMINED to halt the Premier's drift away from "Social Credit," the insurgents drew up a plan of their own which included dividends for consumers and interest free loans. With the constant threat of defeat in the House before him, the Premier, on March 30, introduced a bill to implement the "Social Credit" program, providing for appointment of a committee of five with power to name Douglas mentor if necessary. Willingly or not, the Premier was wedded to "Social Credit" and the insurgents laid down their arms, passing the provisional estimates after hoisting the budget for 90 days. (April 2, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

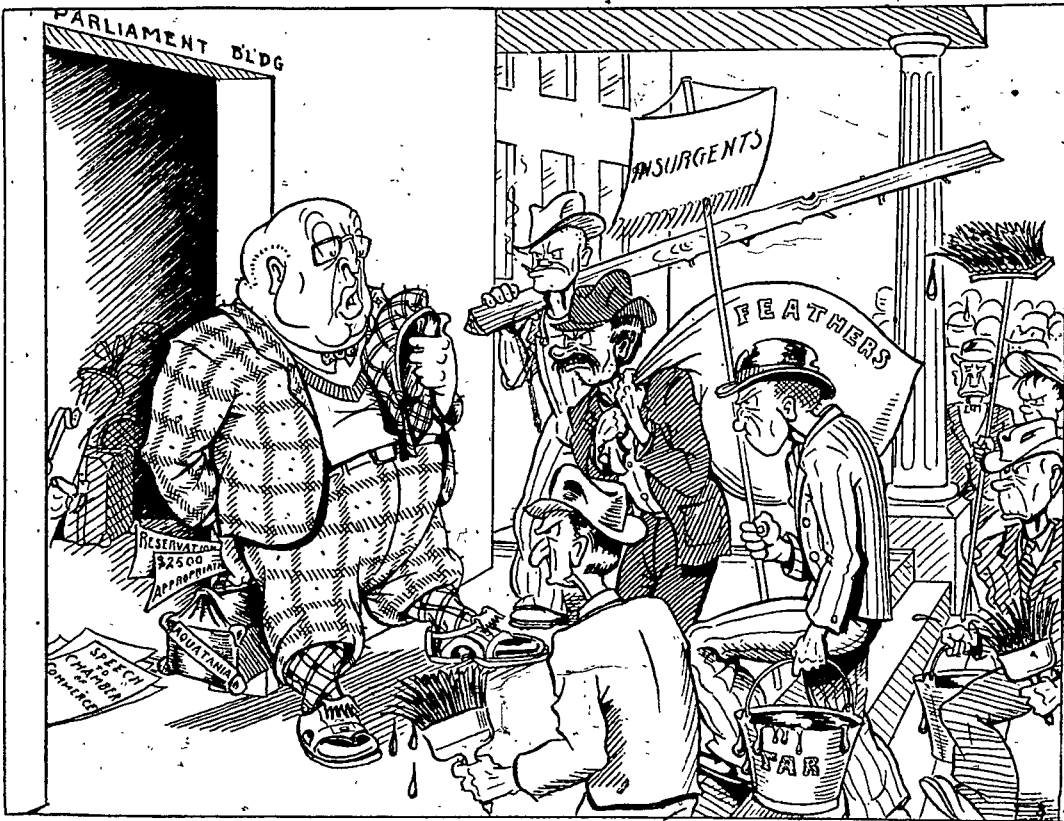
TEACHING HER HOW TO CO-OPERATE



Social Credit Members of the Legislature on Friday approved Mr. Aberhart's suggestion that the pay of M.L.A.'s should be increased to \$2,000 a year.

THE government having become one big, happy family again, the "Social Credit" members now turned to realization of more practical "dividends" and on April 2 voted themselves an additional \$200 indemnity, raising their pay from \$1,800 to \$2,000. What connection the pay boost had with the sudden collapse of rebellion remained unexplained. The taxpayers prepared themselves for another milking. (April 3, 1937.)

THE STATESMAN SEES HIS DUTY



MR. ABERHART (quickly): "I never said I was going to the Coronation."

PRODDED by the insurgents and the press, the Premier (reluctantly?) gave up his "Coronation" jaunt and by April 5 it was definitely abandoned. "I never said I was going to the 'Coronation,'" was his quick explanation to the House. (April 7, 1937.)

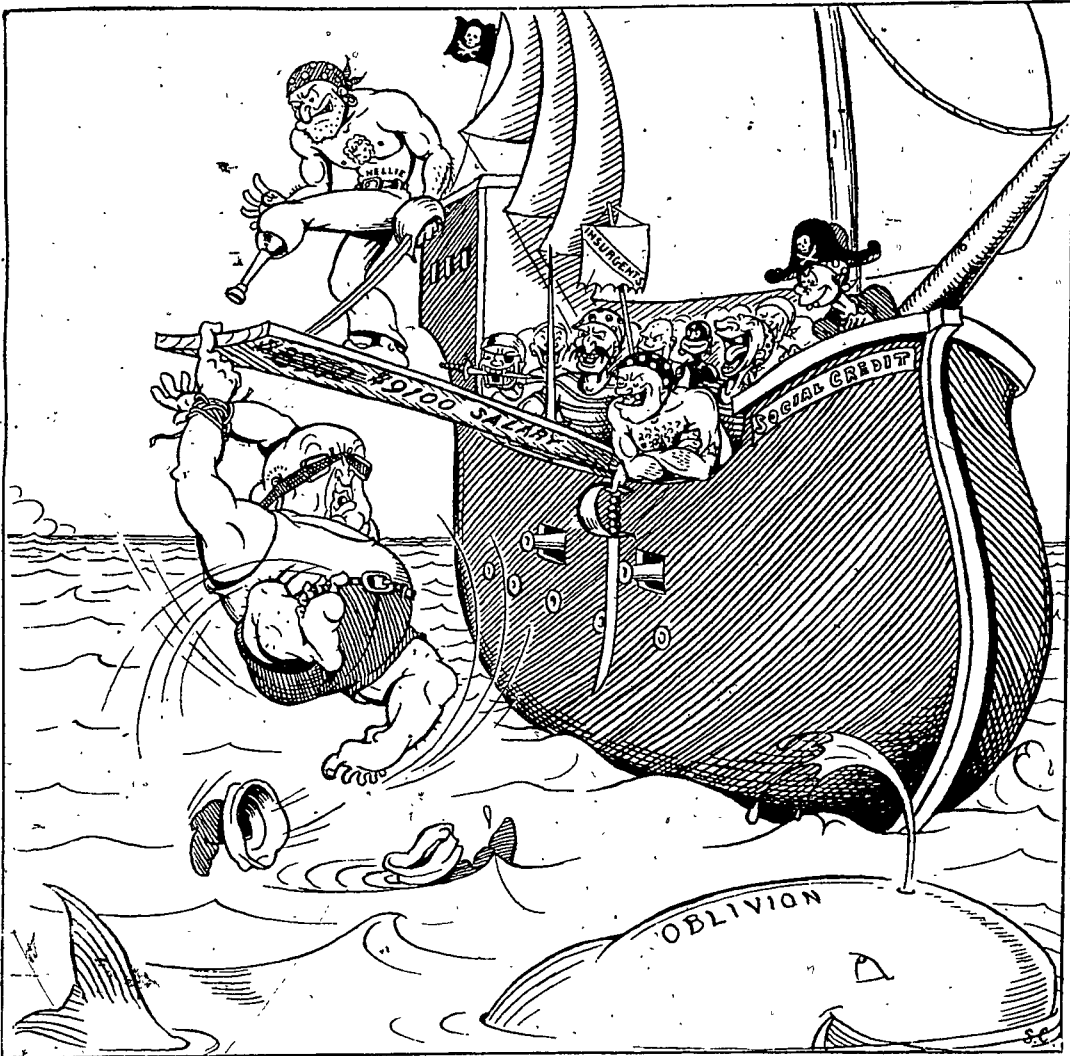
TIGHT BINDING

MAKING RAPID STRIDES



THOUGH the stage was now set for an "advance" toward realization of "Social Credit," and insurgent attacks were daily becoming more feeble, there was little indication that the Premier either had a plan or hoped to evolve one. The cartoonist thought he discerned the government's line of March. (April 9, 1937.)

DROPPING THE PILATE



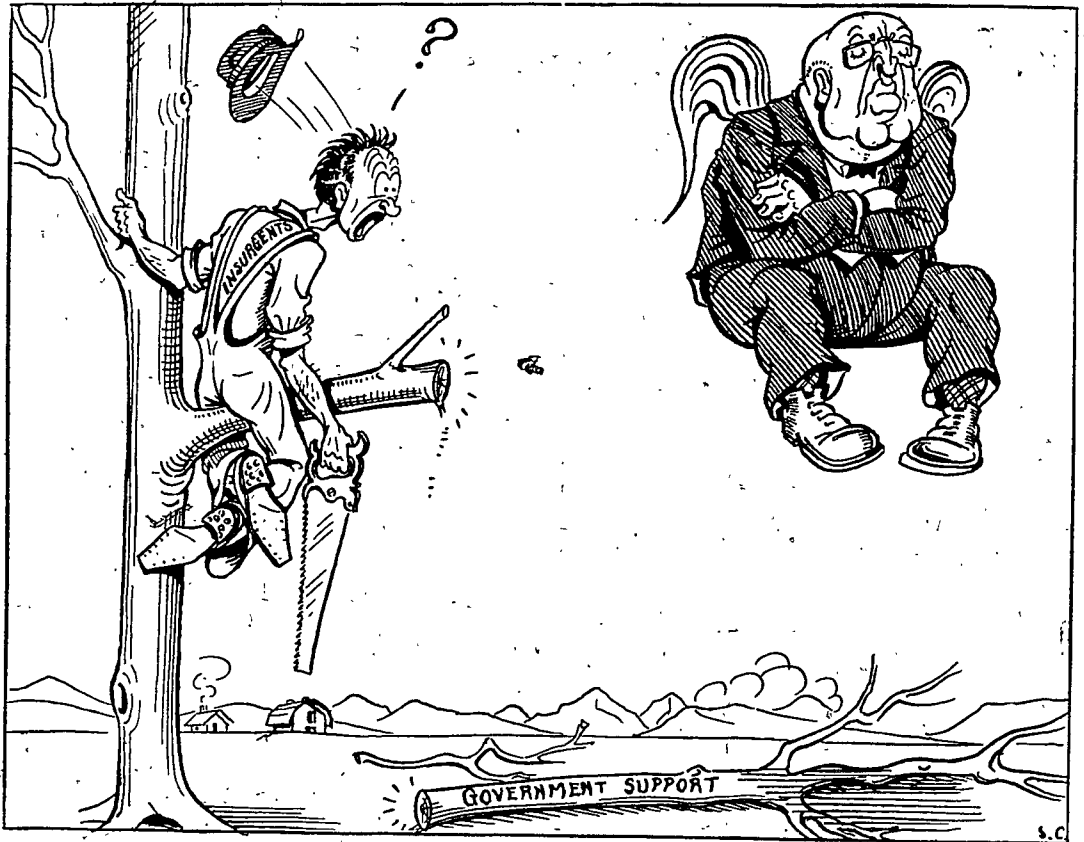
With apologies to Punch.

After three weeks' rapid manoeuvring, Premier Aberhart has successfully washed his hands of the 1935 election promises. Five of his supporters in the House have been loaded with the responsibility of discovering "experts" who can make Social Credit work in Alberta. Social Credit is thus ostensibly "out of politics," and for the present the Premier still holds his job.

ADAPTING the famous "Punch" cartoon to the Alberta situation, the cartoonist returns to his nautical analogy. He was seemingly confused over the spelling of the word "Pilot." (April 10, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

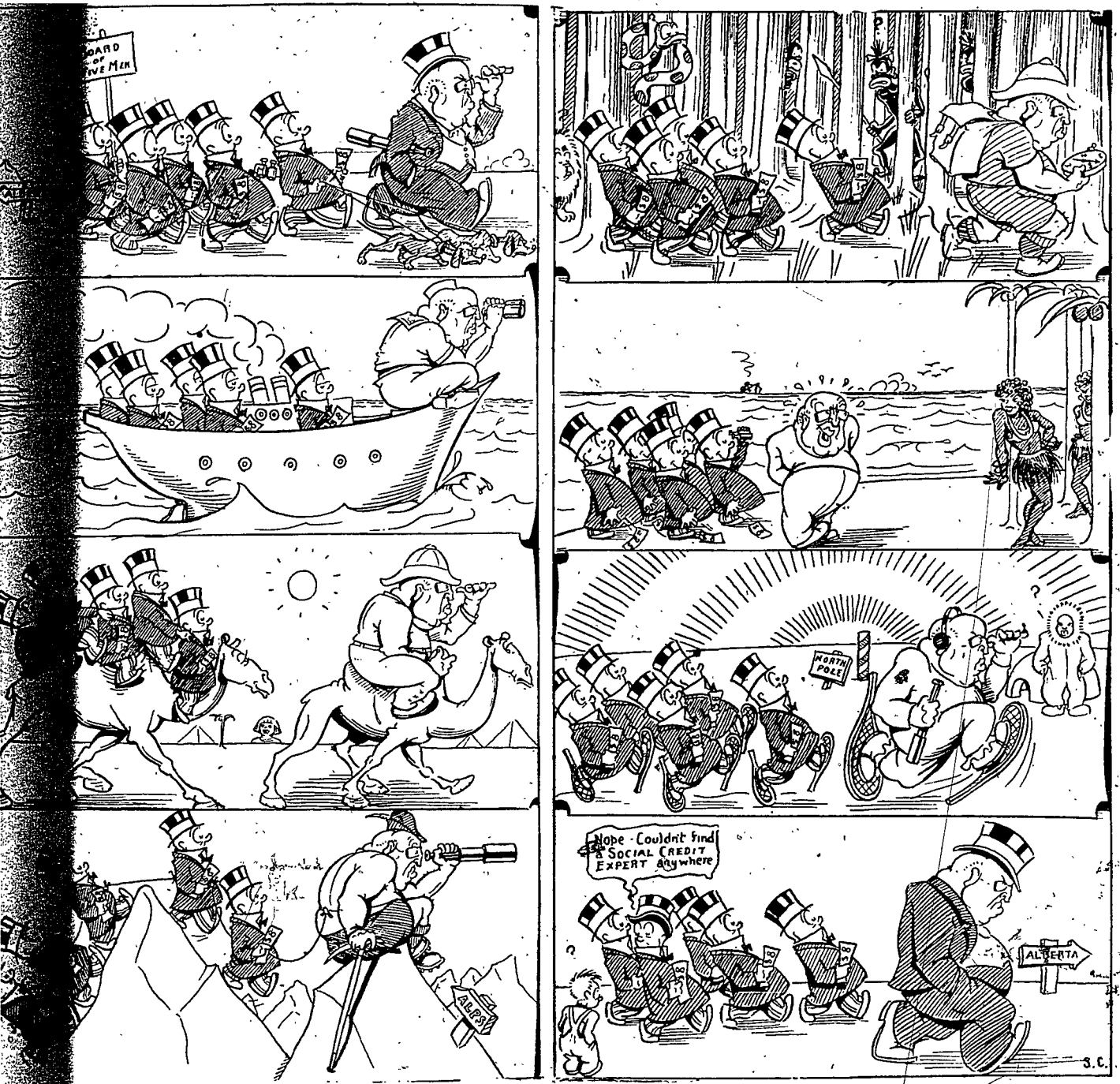
A POLITICAL PHENOMENON



With acknowledgments to J. H. G.,

THE Premier's ability to muster support for his government in the House while assailed by a large proportion of the rank and file astounded many insurgents. They failed to realize quite what had happened to their plans for a new government, fully sympathetic to "Social Credit" aims as propounded by them. The legislature was adjourned, April 14 until June 10, with the Premier still in the saddle and little prospect of unseating him. (April 14, 1937.)

A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

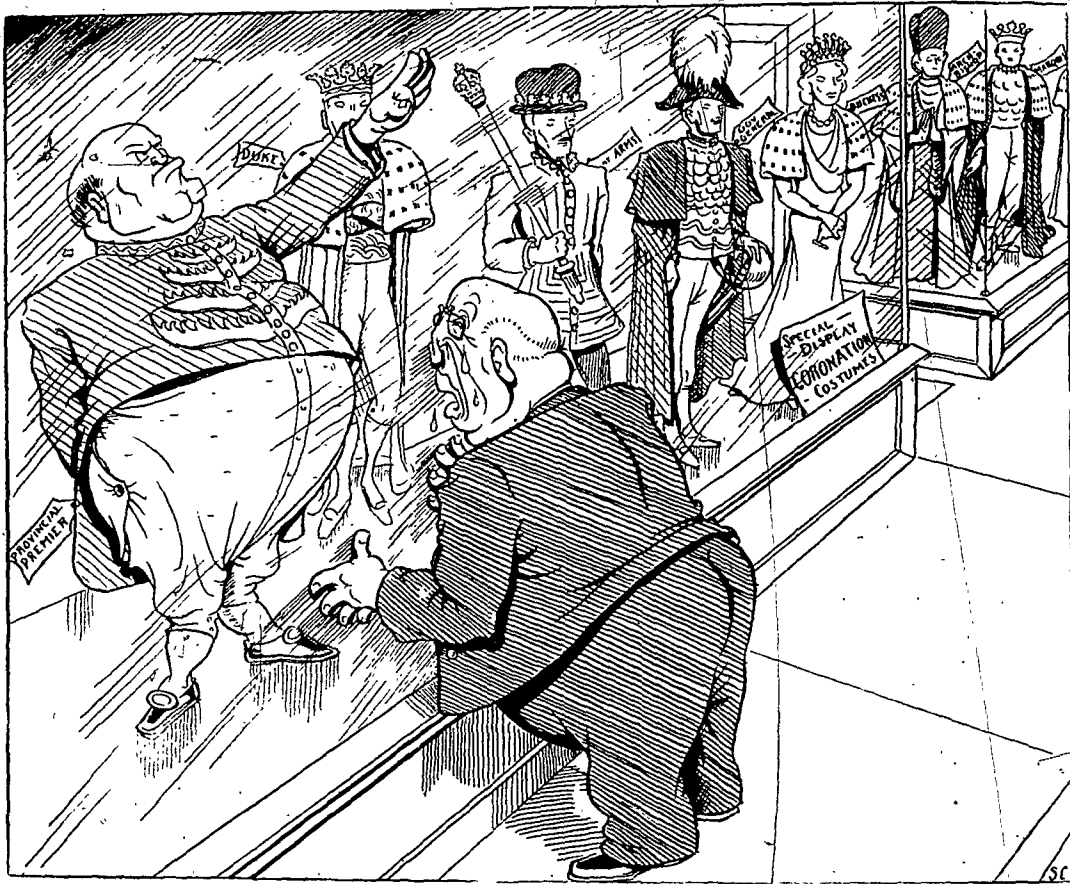


Paragraph Four, Part One, of the Alberta Social Credit Act, authorizes the members of the new Board to visit any part of the world for the purpose of procuring technical experts. Mr. Aberhart volunteered to assist the Board.

IF the Premier had been denied his coveted trip to England, there was still hope of a long junket for members of the newly-appointed "Social Credit" Board. Paragraph Four, Part One, of the Alberta "Social Credit" Act, authorized them to visit any part of the world for the purpose of procuring technical experts. Mr. Aberhart volunteered to assist the Board in its search. The cartoonist envisions the course of the trip and its probable result. (April 17, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

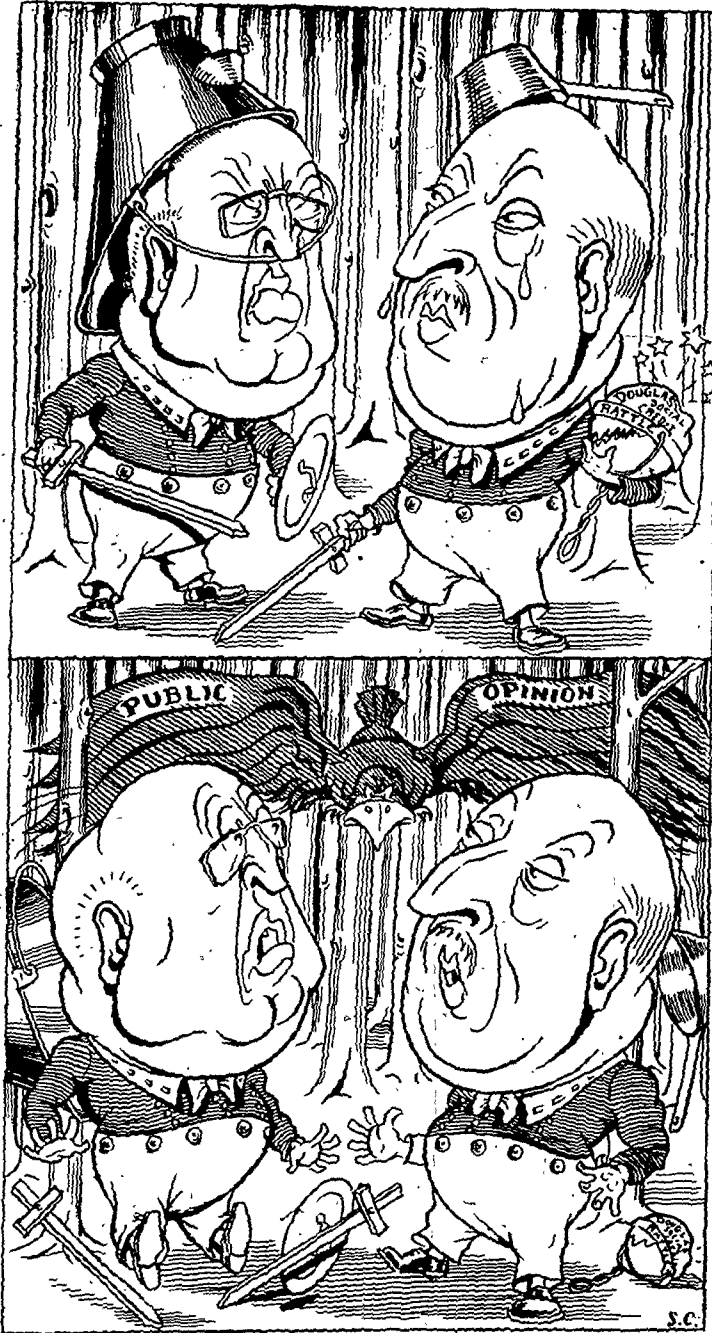


"For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these; it might have been."—Whittier.

ECHOES of the proposed "Coronation" trip were heard on April 22 and again on April 24. On the first date Hon. W. A. Fallow informed a meeting at High River that he had made the arrangements for Aberhart's trip and that the Premier had offered to pay his own expenses. But on April 24 A. J. Hooke, M.L.A., declared at Red Deer, that only twenty-seven party members were present at the caucus which authorized the excursion. There was a general feeling that the Premier was chagrined by cancellation of his plans. The cartoonist recalls the lines of Whittier:

"For of all the sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these; it might have been."

IN LOOKING GLASS LAND



With apologies to Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

Tweedledum and Tweedledee
Agreed to have a battle:
For Tweedledum said Tweedledee
Had spoiled his nice new rattle.

Just then flew down a monstrous crow,
As black as a tar-barrel;
Which frightened both the heroes so
They quite forgot their quarrel.

ALTERCATIONS between Aberhart and Douglas at this time further complicated the provincial picture. The cartoonist, "with apologies to Tweedledum and Tweedledee," called upon the rhyme to illustrate the importance of the battle. (May 1, 1937.)

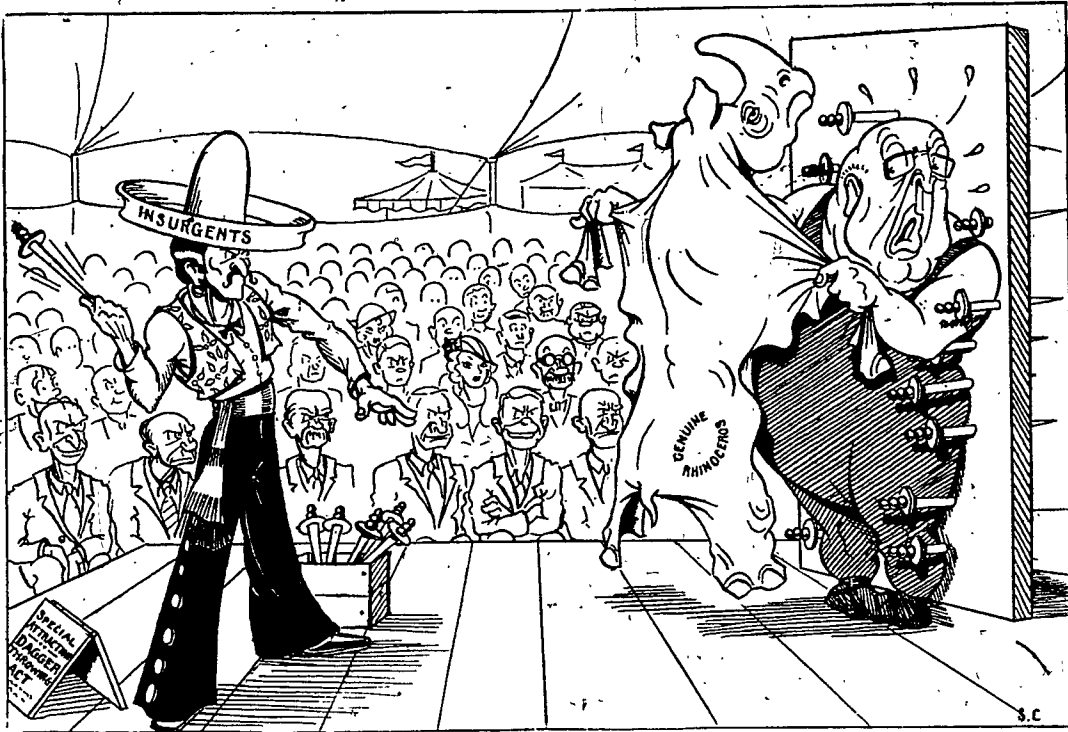
TIGHT BINDING

STICKING TO HIS GUNS



INSURRECTION was still rampant among "Social Credit" M.L.A.'s, despite the Premier's pleadings that they should be good boys and stop opening their ranks to "the enemy." Details of the deals in caucus were brought to light by insurgent members in a series of public addresses. Goaded by the insurgents, the Premier announced he would "stick to his guns" and only give up office when he was kicked out. (May 8, 1937.)

HIGHLY PAID, BUT RISKY

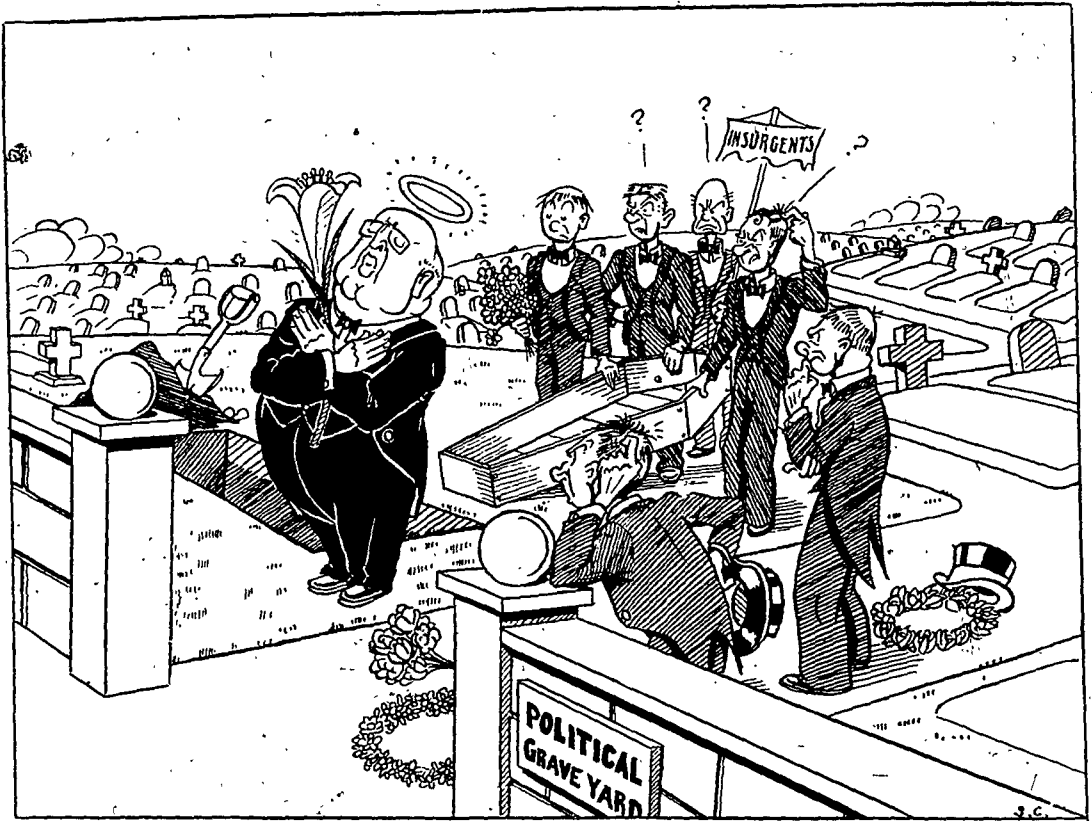


PREMIER ABERHART: "Fortunately during my youth I developed an iron constitution and the hide of a rhinoceros."

THE Insurgent attacks continued, with both sides worked up to a pitch of fury. The Premier publicly bewailed his lot but added: "Fortunately during my youth I developed an iron constitution and the hide of a rhinoceros." (May 15, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

A HITCH IN THE ARRANGEMENTS



INSURGENTS (in chorus): "He's dead but he won't lie down."

CIRCULATION of a questionnaire among party members to ascertain if they wished Aberhart to resign as Premier intensified the struggle, and his opponents were moved to believe that the Premier's term of office would be short. However Mr. Aberhart clung to office. (May 22, 1937.)

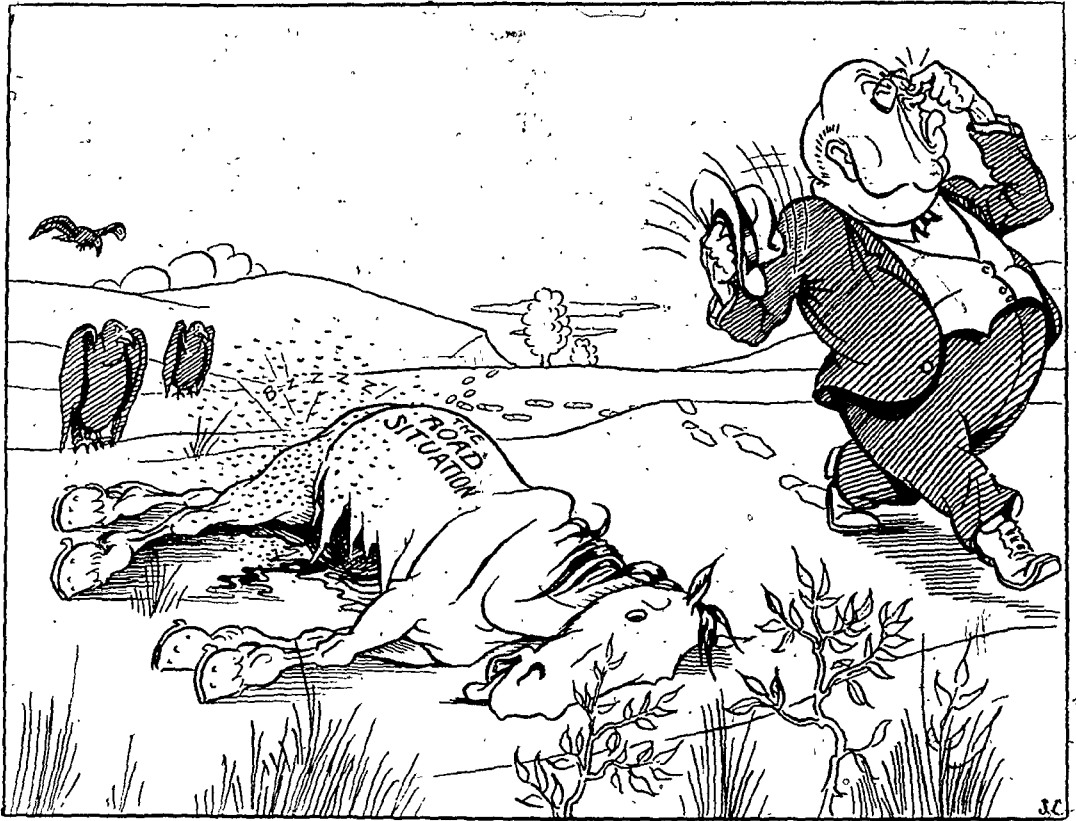
"UNEASY LIES THE HEAD OF ANY GOVERNMENT"



WHEN a number of ex-soldiers, incensed by the wholesale dismissal of war veterans from civil-service positions, joined in the demand for a reckoning, matters looked very serious for the government head. "Uneasy lies the head of any government," wailed the Premier, and the cartoonist took this misquotation at its face value. (May 29, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

WHY BLAME PROVIDENCE?



MR. ADERHART (last Sunday): "Sometimes a pretty bad mess comes out as an act of Divine Providence to speed us on our way."

EARLY in June J. J. Bowlen, M.L.A., of Calgary, moved for an inquiry into the cost of road construction carried on by the government. The Premier and his cabinet at first rejected the Calgary member's request but later capitulated. During an address in the Prophetic Bible Institute the Premier remarked: "Sometimes a pretty bad mess comes out as an act of Divine Providence to speed us on our way." The cartoonist caught the point. (June 23, 1937.)

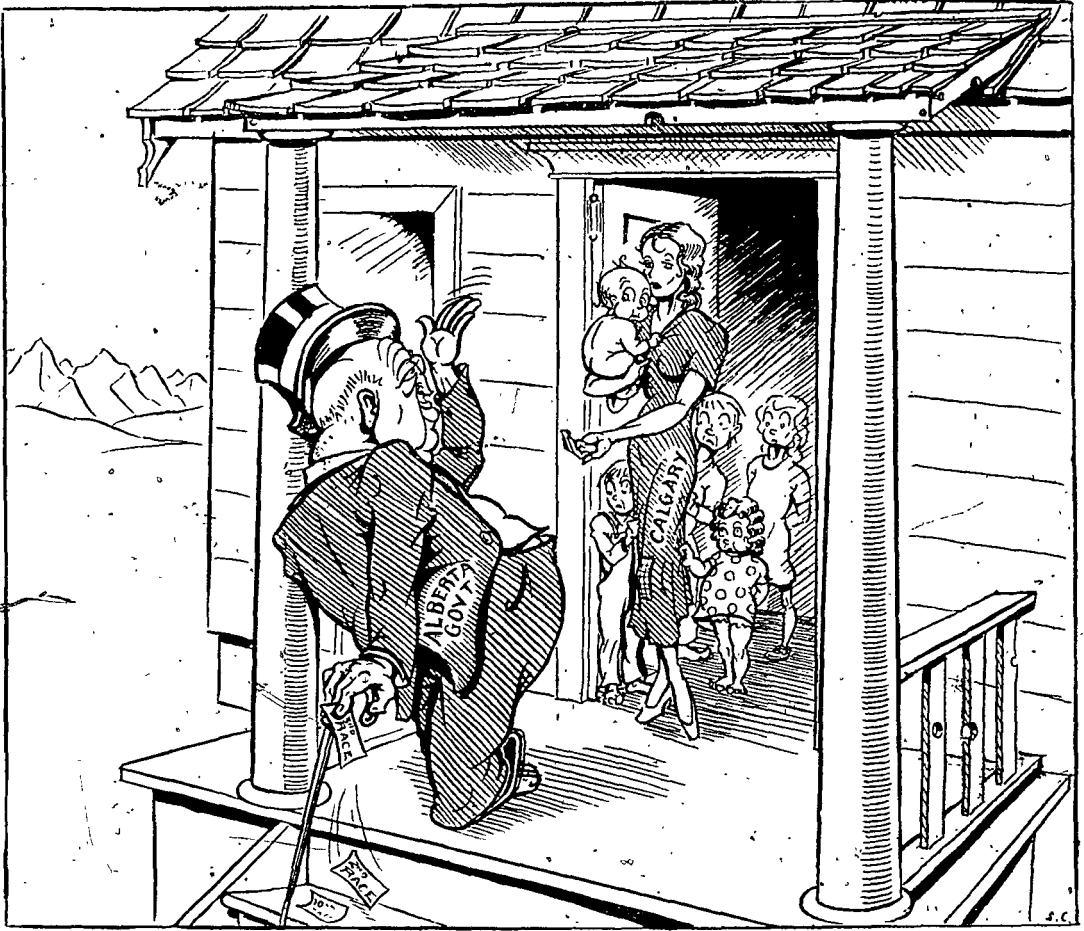
SALUTATIONS



HAVING listened week after week to the Premier's radio appeals for regimentation and funds, Cameron concluded that "Social Credit," like two other great movements, should have its characteristic gesture of greeting. (June 26, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

THE PANHANDLER



EFFORTS of the Calgary City Council to have the province assume its fair share of relief costs caused the Albertan (then supporting the government) to criticize sharply as "panhandling" Mayor Davison's efforts to enlist the Aberhart government's co-operation in a relief works program for the unemployed. One of its statements was as follows: "We seem to have noticed that the City of Calgary has lately been becoming a mendicant—panhandler to you—among municipalities, going around seeing what it can get in the way of handouts." (July 15, 1937.)

THE BETTER TO HOAX HER WITH

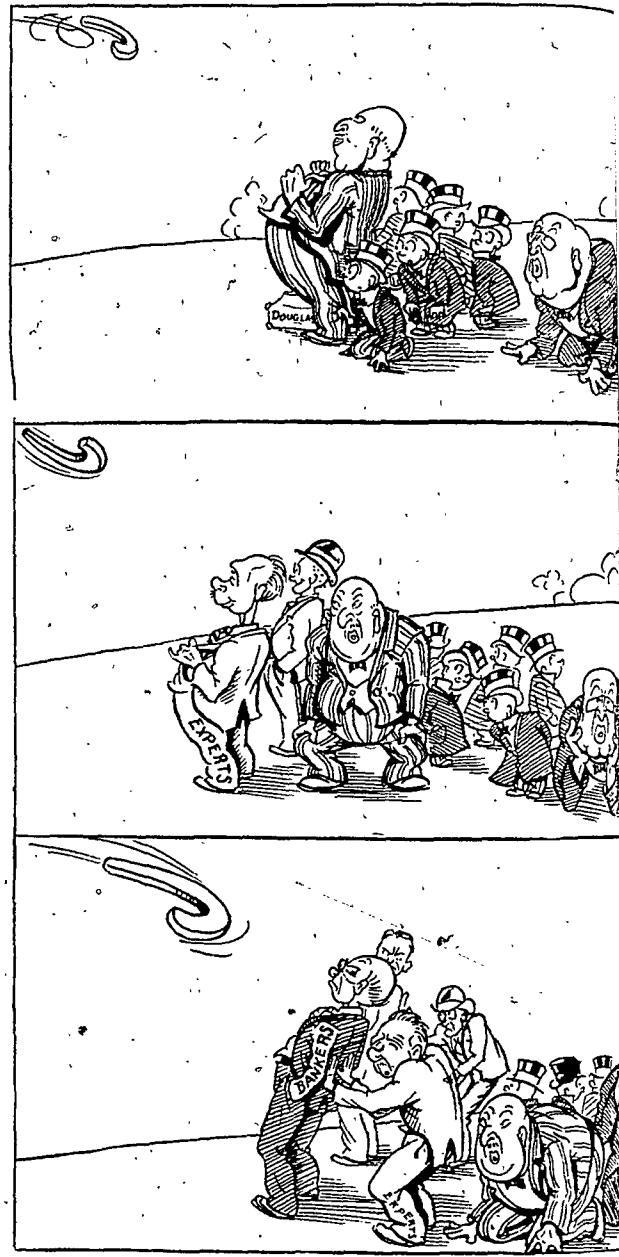
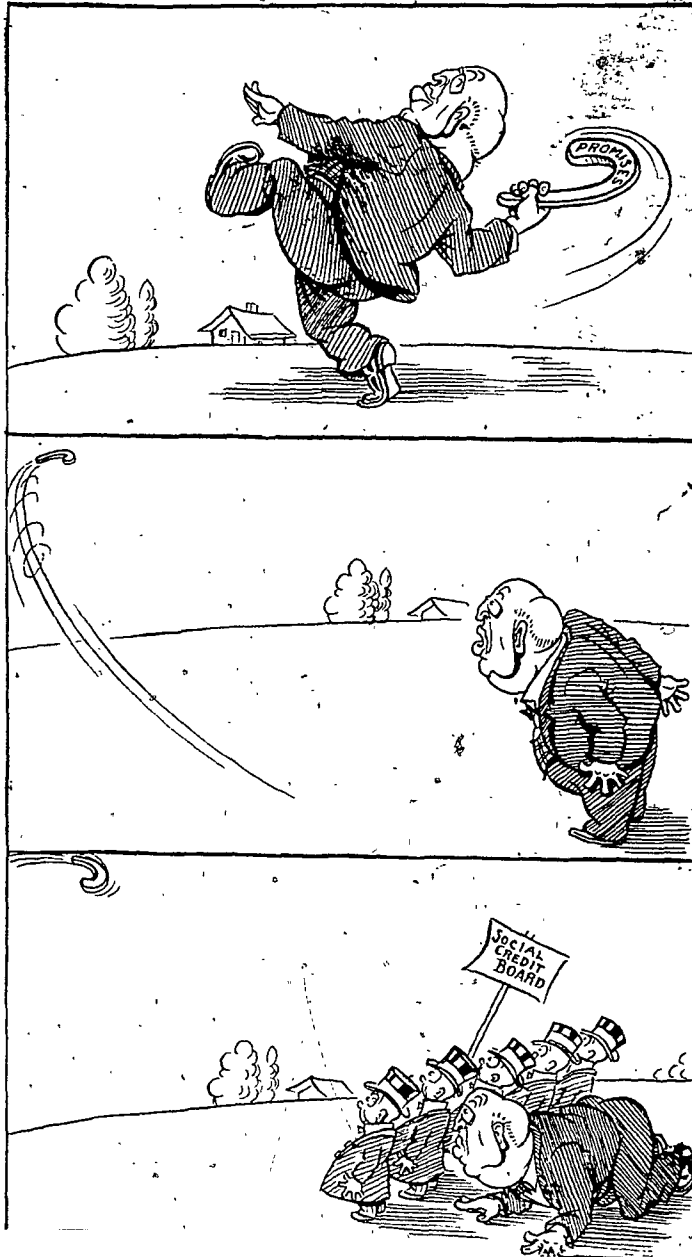


"But what big promises you make, Grandmamma"

OSTENSIBLY with the intention of making a settlement with holders of Alberta's defaulted bonds, an effort was made by the government to have bondholders registered. The bondholders were apathetic toward the idea, fearing even more drastic government action. The cartoonist's mind harked back to "Little Red Riding Hood." (July 21, 1937.)

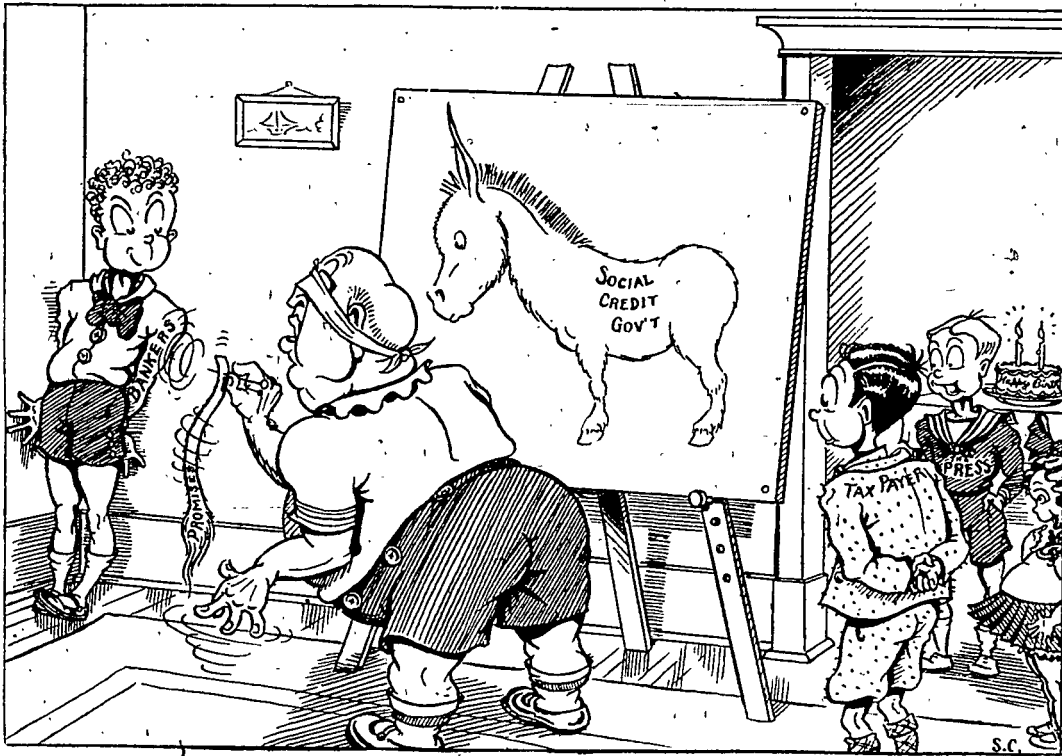
TIGHT BINDING

"TRUE ALBERTAN DEMOCRACY"



AS it became more apparent that "Social Credit" was to be slow of realization, the Premier began to cast about for deputies to take the shock when his unfulfilled promises began to return to him. First it was the "Social Credit" Board, then Major Douglas, and, when these in turn had fled the field, the bankers who were roundly berated on every occasion for not "co-operating" with the government. (July 28, 1937.)

DONKEY PARTY



"PIN the Tail on the Donkey," became the favorite pastime of the government leader, the tail being broken promises. The press and the taxpayer were both aware who the donkey was but the fact seemed to escape the Premier. The cartoonist enlightened him. (July '31, 1937.)

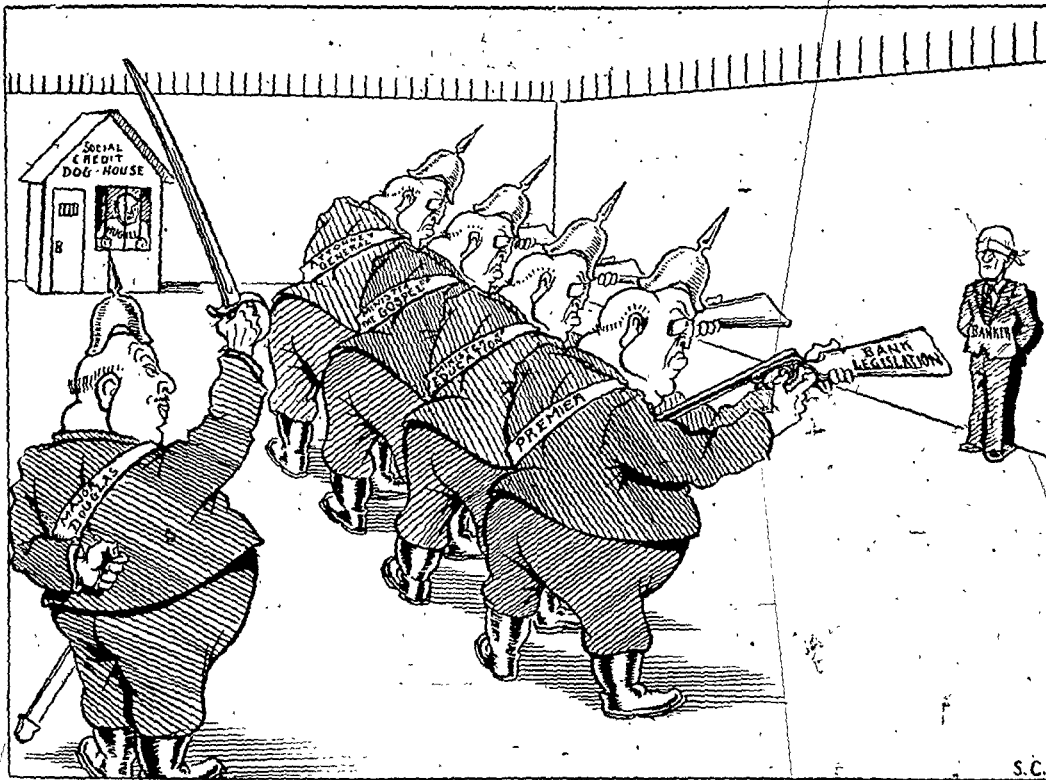
TIGHT BINDING

THE GUARDIAN OF THE TEMPLE



WHEN the government introduced a group of bills at the August Session of the Legislature, which were described by the Opposition as "Hitler legislation," a general wave of uneasiness became apparent throughout the province. Included in the number was a bill to bar unlicensed employees of banks from access to the civil courts. This measure evoked strong protest from the press in Canada and Great Britain. The bill was interpreted as being an open attack upon the civil liberties of the people, and was disallowed by the Federal authorities. Mr. Aberhart defended it on the ground that his government had sole custody of property and civil rights within the Province. (August 7, 1937.)

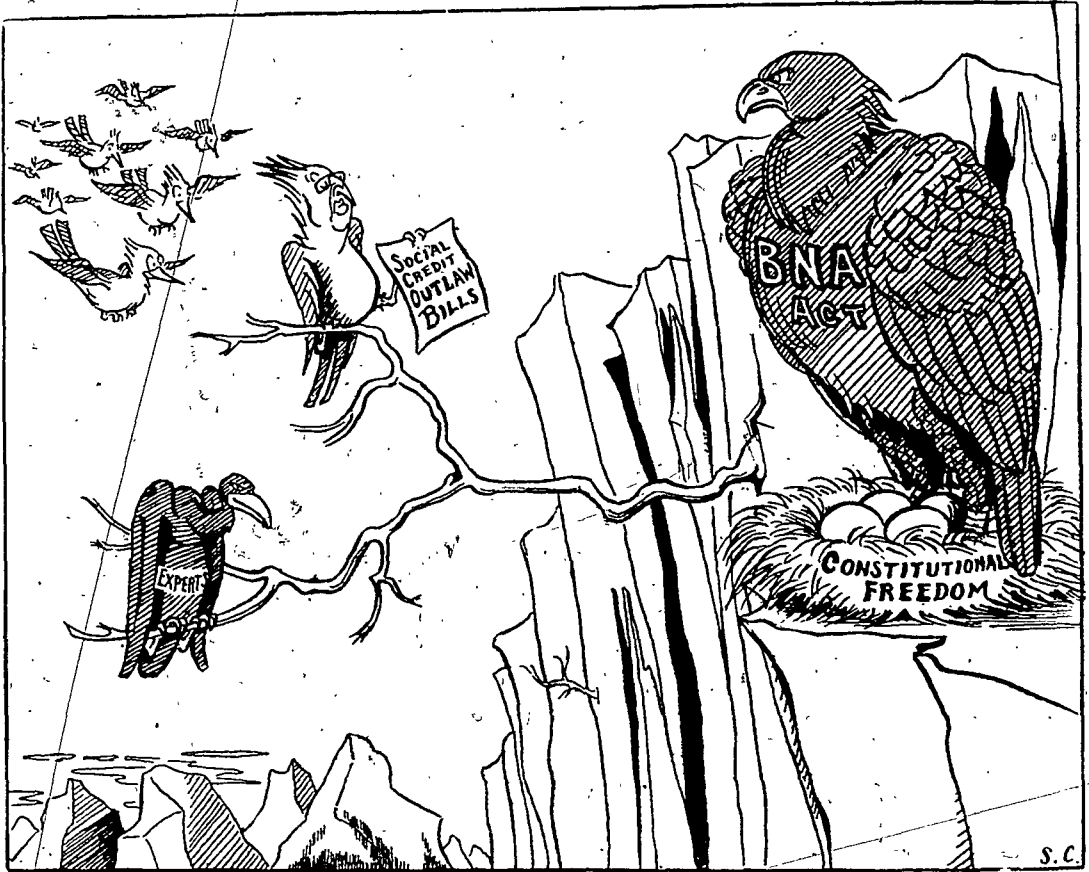
ORGANIZING FOR RESULTS



THAT Major Douglas, high priest of "Social Credit," was behind the attempt to make the banks try to do what the government obviously could not do was the common belief. The bank legislation backfired badly, just as some of the Premier's own Ministers had predicted. (August 11, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

NOTICE OF EVICTION



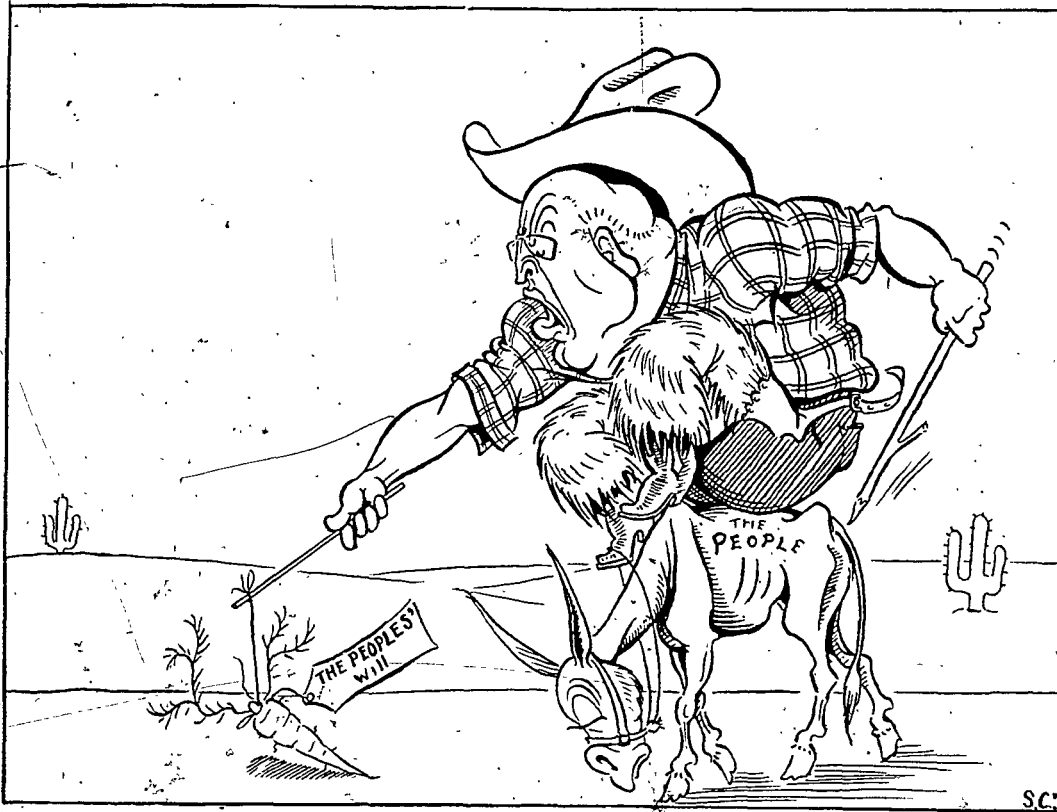
Then spake the Consul Aulus,
He spake a bitter jest:
"Once the jay sent a message
Unto the eagle's nest:—
Now yield thou up thine eyrie
Unto the carrion-kite,

Or come forth valiantly, and face
The jays in deadly fight.—
Forth looked in wrath the eagle;
And carrion-kite and jay,
Soon as they saw his beak and claw,
Fled screaming far away."

—From Macaulay's "Battle of Lake Regillus."

THE Federal Government, guardian of the civil liberties of all Canadians, soon realized the dictatorial import of the new "Social Credit" legislation. The Ottawa government requested the provincial government to delay action until validity of the acts could be determined. This was construed as hostility by the Premier and his followers were urged to "bombard" Ottawa with telegrams, protesting against Federal "interference." (August 14, 1937.)

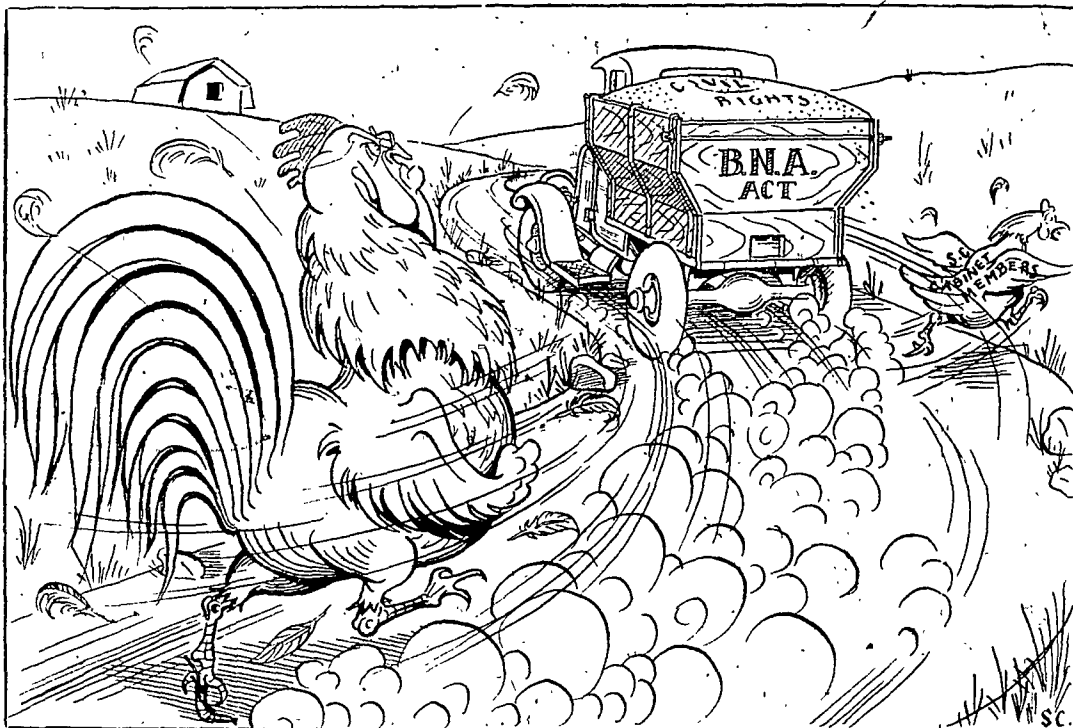
THE SAME OLD CARROT



THE Premier professed himself "dumbfounded" at the request of the federal Government for a court test of the validity of his legislation. The old, and by now somewhat overworked slogan "The will of the people," was trotted out but it had lost its flavor. The people of Alberta refused to rouse themselves against the Federal Government. (August 17, 1937.)

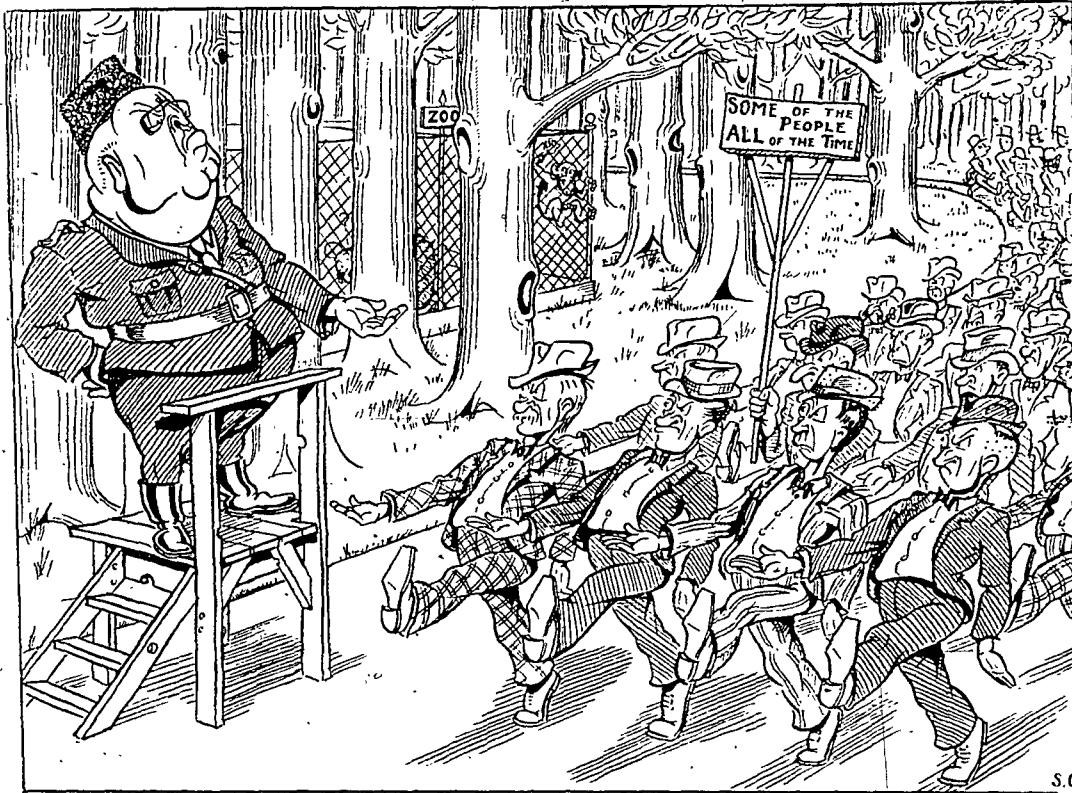
TIGHT BINDING

THE CHALLENGE



WHEN the provincial government refused to allow the disputed legislation to go to court, the Federal authorities promptly disallowed it. Disallowance was met by a blast of wrath from the provincial government and on August 20 Aberhart challenged the Federal right of disallowance, placing all blame for the "crisis" on Ottawa. (August 31, 1937.)

"OH PROMISE ME!"

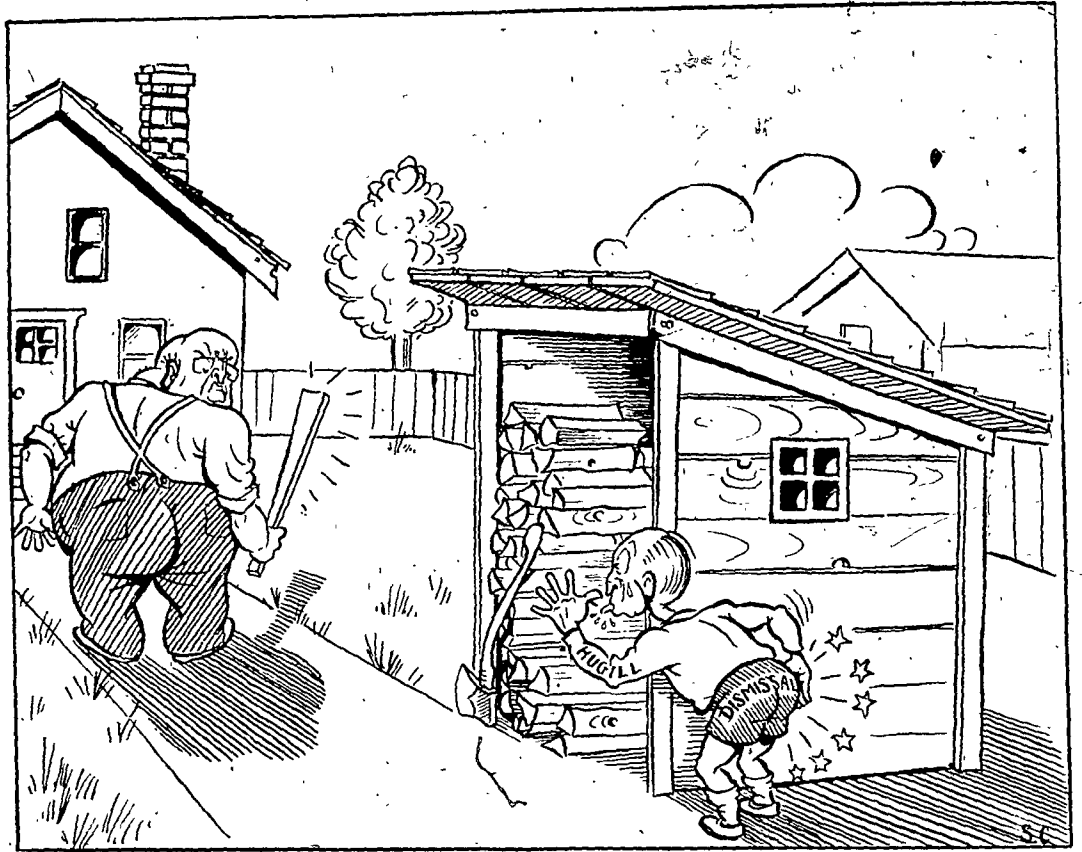


Grand March Past and Salute to the strains of the new theme song.

ON August 30 the Premier addressed a large rally of his followers at St. George's Island Park in Calgary, where he declared he intended putting his new legislation into effect in spite of Federal disallowance. A "Grand March Past" had been planned, but never came off. Cameron's conception, published in advance, may have seemed too much for the organizers to live up to. (August 28, 1937.)

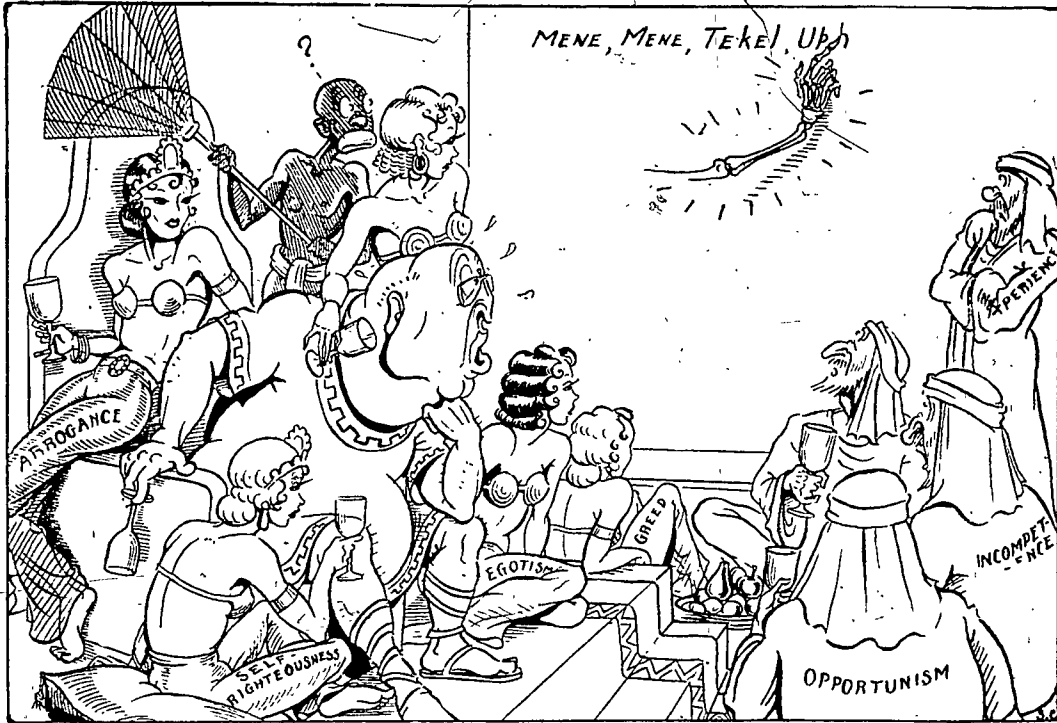
TIGHT BINDING

PUNISHED BUT NOT PENITENT



REFUSING to be party to legislation which he knew was not within powers of the provincial legislature, Attorney-General John W. Hugill, of Calgary, resigned his office. On September 23 he renounced his pledges to the government and stated he would go into opposition. The Premier's punishment of his former cabinet colleague had failed to silence him. (September 25, 1937.)

A PLAIN CASE FOR THE CENSOR

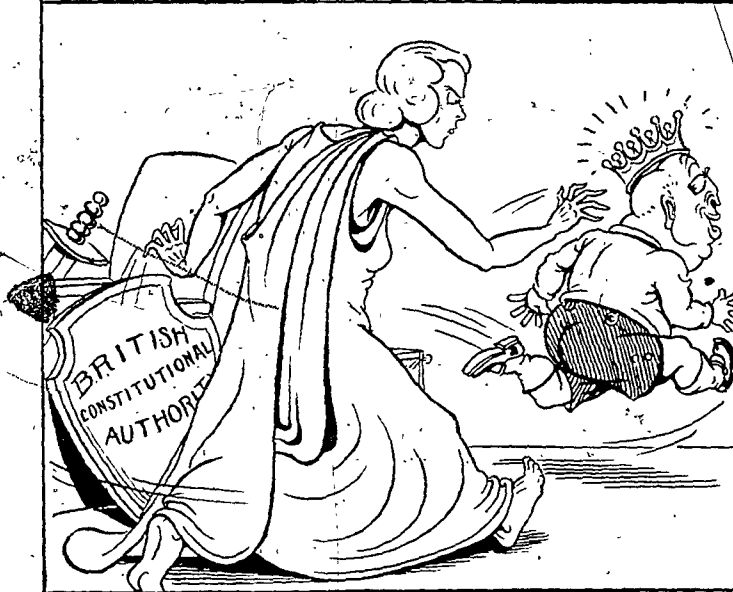


Belshazzar weighs the possibilities of a press control law.

LATE in September a press licensing bill was before a caucus of "Social Credit" members. Some weeks previously the Premier had delivered himself of the considered opinion: "Some of these days these creatures with mental-hydrophobia will be taken in hand and their biting and barking will cease." (October 2, 1937.)

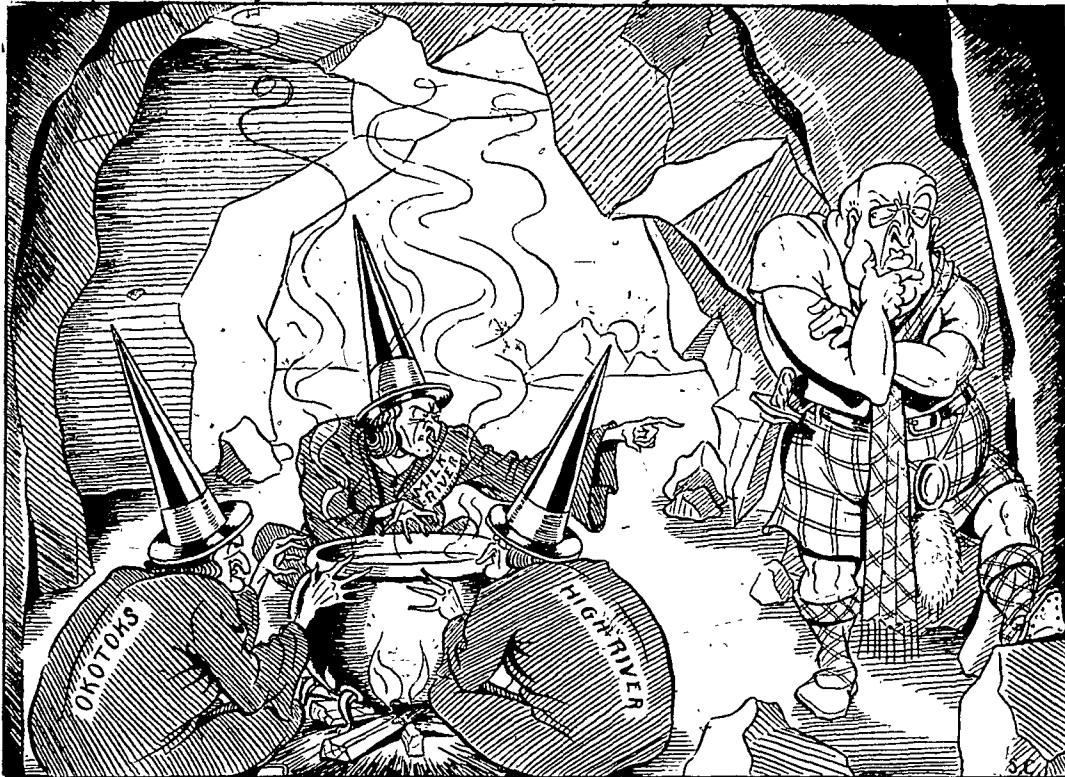
TIGHT BINDING

MOTHER KNOWS BEST.



UNDETERRED by the Federal Government's disallowance of his freak legislation, Aberhart announced during the October session of the legislature that the disallowed legislation would be augmented or similar legislation substituted for it. On October 6, however, the Lieutenant-Governor refused to give assent to the press and bank licensing and "Social Credit" regulation bills. The government was once more soundly spanked for defying constitutional authority. (October 7, 1937.)

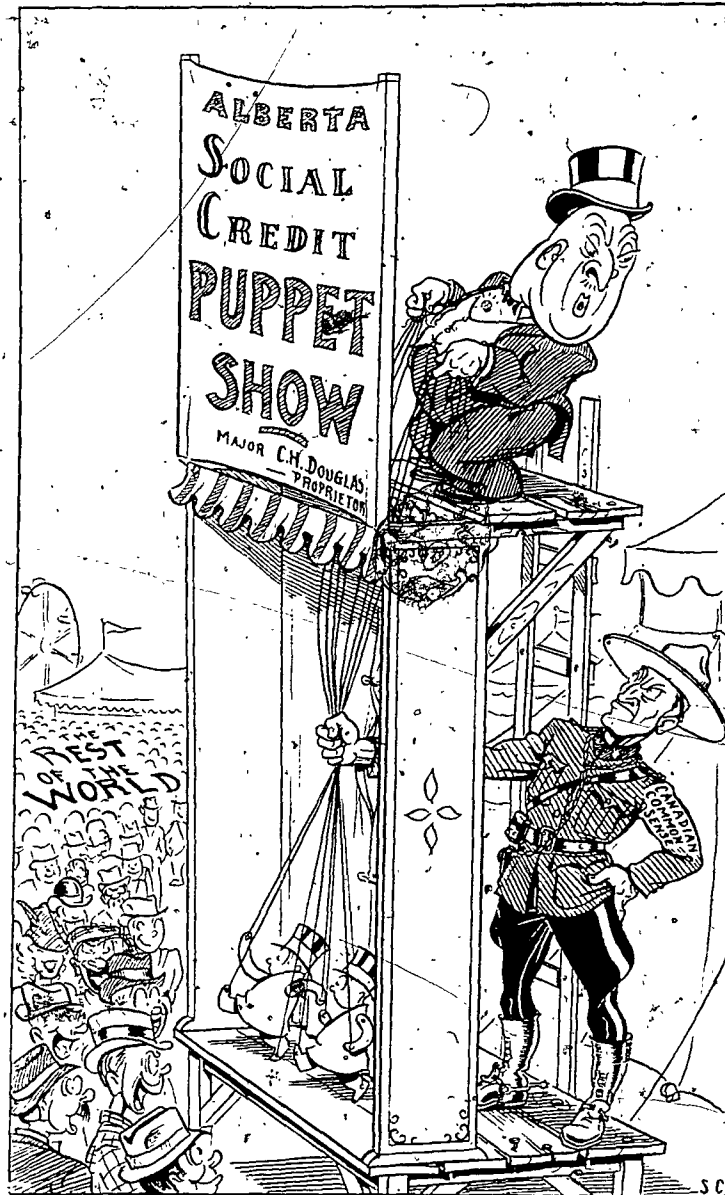
**"DOUBLE, DOUBLE, TOIL AND TROUBLE; FIRE BURN
AND CAULDRON BUBBLE."**



AT the end of the first two years of the "Social Credit" Government's régime, there was still no "Social Credit" in sight. Dividends had not been paid and unemployment was increasing steadily. Conditions throughout the province were very unsettled. Heartily dissatisfied with Premier Aberhart's record, his constituents in the High River-Okotoks district instituted recall proceedings against him. Simultaneously a meeting at Milk River demanded a provincial election. Mr. Aberhart found himself much in the plight of Shakespeare's unhappy Macbeth who entered the witch's cave only to hear her foretell his ultimate doom. (October 9, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING

A LITTLE INTERRUPTION



THE Alberta Legislature was in special session during October, 1937, when pamphlets, headed "Bankers' Toadies" appeared on the desks of some of the members of the Conservative and Liberal Opposition. The opposition demanded an inquiry by the House, but the government party voted the proposal down. Individuals named in the pamphlets decided to take legal action, and on October 6, G. F. Powell, British "Social Credit" expert, and J. H. Unwin, "Social Credit" M.L.A. for Edson and party whip, were arrested on charges of criminal libel and counselling to murder. From far-off London, England, Major C. H. Douglas warned that "trouble" would follow the arrest of his personal envoy, Mr. Powell. Powell and Unwin were subsequently convicted and imprisoned. (October 16, 1937.)

TIGHT BINDING